

# THE DUBLIN REVIEW

April 1941

*Edited by*

CHRISTOPHER DAWSON

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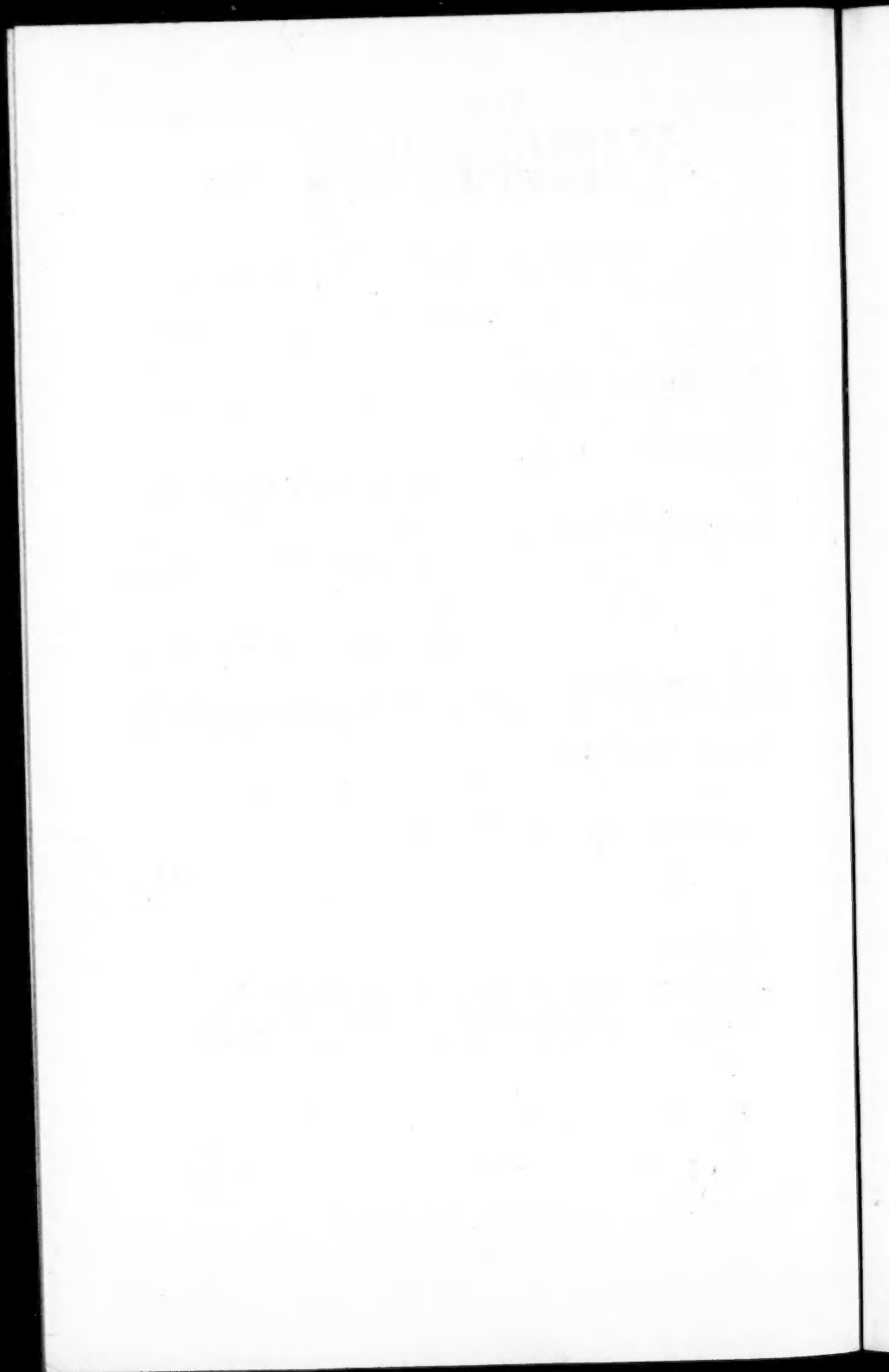
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# The Dublin Review

APRIL, 1941

No. 417

## CHRISTIANITY AND CULTURE

IT is not possible to discuss the modern situation either from the point of view of religion or politics without using the word "culture". But the word has been used in so many different senses and is capable of so many shades of meaning that it is necessary to say something at the outset as to the sense in which I am going to use it, in order to avoid unnecessary confusion.

The *Concise Oxford Dictionary* gives three senses—tillage, improvement by mental or physical training, and intellectual development. None of these, however, is precisely the sense in which the word is used by anthropologists, and now to an increasing extent also by historians and sociologists. From the year 1871, when Tylor in England published his famous book on *Primitive Culture*, and from a much earlier date on the continent, the word has been extended to cover the whole complex of institutions and customs and beliefs, as well as arts and crafts and economic organization, which make up the social inheritance of a people. Thus it is almost interchangeable with the word "civilization", except that the latter is as a rule restricted to the higher forms of culture, as there is an obvious objection to speaking of the "civilization" of an uncivilized people. I use "culture", therefore, as the wider and more inclusive term, and "civilization" as a particular type of culture in its higher and more conscious manifestations.

Thus it is possible to get behind or beyond civilization and study human nature in a relatively primitive state. But it is never possible to get beyond culture. The eighteenth-century idea of a State of Nature in which man existed before he got entangled in the meshes of the state and of organized religion, and to which he must think himself back in order to construct a rational order of society, is, of course, completely mythical and unreal. Primitive man is just as much part of a social pattern, often a very elaborate one, and is just as much

dependent on cultural traditions, as civilized man, or even more so.

In the same way it is impossible to separate culture from religion, and the further we go back in history, or the lower we descend in the scale of social development, the more closely are they related to one another. It is easy to understand the reason for this, which is inherent in the nature of religion itself. For religion is not, as the rationalists of the last two centuries believed, a secondary phenomenon which has arisen from the exploitation of human credulity, or, as Hobbes puts it, "from opinion of Ghosts, Ignorance of second causes, Devotion towards what men fear and Taking of things Casuall for Prognostiques": it lies at the very centre of human consciousness, in man's sense of his dependence on higher powers and of his relation to the spiritual world. The simpler a culture is the closer is its relation with religion; not, of course, because a low culture is more spiritual than the higher ones, but because the narrow limits of its control over nature increases man's sense of dependence, so that it seems impossible for society to exist without the help of the mysterious powers that surround him.

The relation between the higher and lower forms of religions have never been more perfectly stated than in the words of the Apostles to the simple Lycaonians, when they accepted Barnabas and Paul as gods: "We preach that you should turn from these vanities to serve the living God who made heaven and earth and the sea and all things that are therein, who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless He left not Himself without witness in that He did good and gave us rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." The religion of primitive man is concerned with just these things—food and rain and the course of the seasons. In them he sees the hand of God and the working of sacred and magical forces. Therefore the ways by which men live and the crises of their lives are inextricably interwoven with religious beliefs and practices to form the pattern of culture.

Nevertheless, even the crudest and most primitive forms of religion are never completely restricted to this pattern; they always possess an element of transcendence without which they would cease to be religion. For, since religion is the bond between Man and God, between human society and the spiritual world, it always has a twofold aspect. To the outsider, whether he be a traveller or a rational critic, primitive religions seem like a dead weight of social convention and superstition which prevents the society from advancing; to the primitive himself, however, it is the way of the gods, the traditional consecrated order which brings human life into communion with the higher powers; and we see from the history of more developed religions that the most simple and elementary religious practices are capable, not merely of becoming charged with religious emotion, but of becoming the vehicle of profound religious ideas—as, for example, the ritual of sacrifice in ancient India or the ceremonial ordering of the calendar in ancient China.

On the other hand, when we come to the higher religions where there is a conscious effort to assert the absolute transcendence of God and of the spiritual order, we still do not find any complete divorce between religion and culture. Even Buddhism, which seems at first sight to turn its back on human life and to condemn all the natural values on which human culture is built, nevertheless has as great an influence on culture and impresses its character on the social life of the Thibetans or the Cingalese no less than a religion which adopts a frankly positive, or, as we say, "pagan", attitude towards nature and human life. Religions of this type do, however, bring out more clearly the element of tension and conflict in the relation between religion and culture, which it is easy to ignore in a primitive religion since it seems completely fused and identified with the social pattern.

In neither type of culture therefore do we find anything that really corresponds to the problem that confronts us at the present day—the problem of a state of separation and dislocation between religion and culture; in other words, the problem of a secularized

culture. No doubt other cultures have passed through phases of relative secularization, e.g. China in the third century B.C. and Rome in the last age of the Republic. But these phases were confined to particular societies, and almost certainly to small classes or elites in these societies. Today, however, it is a world-wide phenomenon, and, at least in the more advanced societies, it extends through the whole social structure and affects the life of the common people no less than the thought of the leading classes and groups.

Now it is easy enough to explain the universality of the present situation. It is due to the world-wide extension of Western civilization by imperial expansion, by material progress and by economic and intellectual penetration. But what is the relation between the immense extension of modern Western civilization and its secularization? Are they related as cause and effect? And if so, is the extension the cause of the secularization, or *vice versa*?

There is no doubt that the rapid material progress and external expansion of Western culture has had a secularizing effect. World empires usually tend to lose touch with their spiritual roots, and the same is true of the expansion of a civilization by way of administrative and intellectual influence, as we see in the case of the Hellenistic world in the third and second centuries B.C. Nevertheless this is not the essential cause of the change. Western culture was becoming secularized before the great period of its expansion had begun. The fundamental causes of that process were spiritual and closely related to the whole spiritual development of Western Man. But the same causes which produced the secularization of culture were also responsible for its external expansion. They were, in fact, two aspects of a single process, a world revolution of such a tremendous kind that it seems to transcend history and creates new categories with which our traditional standards of judgement are incapable of dealing.

It is with regard to the religious issue that the traditional methods of interpretation are most defective. For if we consider the problem from a Christian point of view, we are faced by the paradox that it was a Christian



culture and not a pagan one which was the source of this revolution, while the secular historian is brought up against the equally disturbing fact that the non-secular element in Western culture has been the dynamic element in the whole process of change. Thus the complete secularization of culture by removing this element would bring the progressive movement to a full stop, and would bring about a static society which has mastered social change to such a degree that it no longer possesses any vital momentum.

This is the greatness and misery of modern civilization—that it has conquered the world by losing its own soul, and that when its soul is lost it must lose the world as well. Western culture has never been a natural unity, like the great civilizations of the ancient East, like Egypt and China and India. It is a changing association of peoples and countries which owes its unity to the continuity of its tradition, a tradition which it did not even originate but which it inherited and transformed and enlarged until it became the source of a new world and a new humanity. For a thousand years the bearer of this tradition was the Christian Church, and during this formative period it was only by becoming members of the Church that the nations became partakers in the community of Western culture.

The importance of this factor has seldom been sufficiently appreciated by the historians. They recognize the influence of the Church on mediaeval history, and the way in which the religious unity of Christendom conditioned the cultural development of the Western peoples. But, it seems to me, they have none of them fully realized the significance of the fact which is almost unique in world history: that Europe found its unity and cultural form not simply by the profession of a common faith, but by entering a spiritual community which was already existing and which possessed an independent principle of organization, with its own organs of authority and its own institutions and laws. The mediaeval Church was not a state within a state, but a super-political society of which the state was a subordinate, local and limited organ. Ideally there was one great

society—that of the Christian people—with a twofold hierarchy of spiritual and temporal ministers. And the spiritual conflict which occupied the mediaeval consciousness was concerned not merely with the relations of the two hierarchies to one another, but less consciously and more profoundly with the problem of reconciling this ideal order with the real world of territorial states and feudal principalities, which the descendants of the barbarians had built for themselves by the sword.

The existence of this double dualism—of Church and state and of Christian ideal and barbaric reality—is one of the main reasons why Western Christendom did not develop into a closed religious civilization like those of the ancient East. Instead, the unity of Christendom was broken and the cultural hegemony of the Church was destroyed by the religious revolution of the sixteenth century. But though this prepared the way for the secularization of culture, nothing could have been further from the mind and intention of the leaders of the movement. On the contrary, it seemed to them that they were working for the desecularization of the Church, and the restoration of Christianity to its primitive purity. They did not realize that the attempt to purify and separate religion from its cultural accretions, might find its counterpart in the separation of culture from religion and the increasing secularization of life and thought. And this was in fact what happened; though it was a gradual process which took centuries to complete itself.

Nevertheless, the new lay humanist culture which was beginning to develop in the West in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was far from being entirely secular. As Burdach has shown, the very conception of the Renaissance or the rebirth of culture was closely connected with the Reformation or the rebirth of Christianity. Both were influenced in their origins by the apocalyptic hopes of a spiritual renewal of Christendom, which was so widespread in the later middle ages and which found different forms of expression in Northern and Southern Europe. Neither the Humanists nor the Reformers dreamt of the destruction of Chris-

tendom. They believed, like Erasmus, that "the world was coming to its senses as if awakening out of a deep sleep", and they thought that religion and culture could slough off their old skins and could renew their youth by returning to their origins.

Thus the Renaissance achievement was like that of Columbus, who discovered the New World by attempting to find his way back to the Old World by a new route. The sudden removal of the fixed limits which had bounded the thought and action of mediaeval man, the opening of new worlds and the realization of the boundless possibilities of human reason, caused a release of energies which gave Western culture a new world-embracing character. Though Western science was still in its infancy, men like Leonardo da Vinci and Paracelsus and Campanella and Bacon had already begun to realize its world-transforming possibilities.

"Glory to Him who knows and can do all" [writes Campanella]:

"O my art, grandchild to the Primal Wisdom, give some hint of his fair image which is called Man."

"A second God, the First's own miracle, he commands the depths; he mounts to Heaven without wings and counts its motions and measures and its natures."

"The wind and the sea he has mastered and the earthly globe with pooped ship he encircles, conquers and beholds, barterers and makes his prey."

"He sets laws like a God. In his craft, he has given to silent parchment and to paper the power of speech and to distinguish time he gives tongue to brass." \*

The author of these verses is a striking example of the way in which the thought of the Renaissance united humanist and scientific culture with apocalyptic religious ideals and revolutionary hopes for a new order of society.

Throughout his long imprisonment of thirty years in the prisons of Spain and the Inquisition, Campanella continued to advocate his ideas of the coming of a new order which would unite mankind under the rule of nature. But even in its earliest and most revolutionary

\* Trans. E. Gardner.

form Campanella's City of the Sun was far from being secular. It was a totalitarian communist theocracy governed by a priest king—the Metaphysician—elected by universal suffrage, and three magistrates representing the three divine hypostases—Power, Wisdom and Love—who deal respectively with war, science and education, and economics and eugenics. Neither property, marriage nor the family were admitted and the magistrates distribute work according to aptitude, honours according to merit and food according to needs and constitution.

At first sight the Utopia of Campanella resembles that of Thomas More, but at the same time it differs profoundly in spirit and intention. It was not for the sake of Utopia that Thomas More lost his head, but in defence of the traditional order of Christendom. But Campanella's Utopianism had a definitely revolutionary character which showed itself in the fantastic attempt of a handful of friars and outlaws to overthrow the Spanish Government in 1599, and to set up the City of the Sun on Mount Stilo in Calabria. Thus I believe that Campanella, more than Thomas More, and more than the Anabaptists of Münster, should be regarded as the forerunner of modern revolutionary socialism, more especially as the idea of the organization and control of social life by natural science formed an essential part of his theory. Yet in spite of the revolutionary character of his thought, and in spite of its complete divorce from the cultural tradition of mediaeval Christendom, his ideal, as I have already said, was not a secular one. He looked back to the pagan identification of religion with culture, rather than forward to the modern secular state and the desecularization of life. It was for this reason that he was so bitterly opposed to the Reformation, which he regarded as an individualist movement to desecularize religion inspired by the natural indiscipline of the Germanic people: in fact the new revolt of the barbarians.

For all his misunderstanding of the situation, there remains this element of truth: that, in fact, the chief cause of the secularization of Western culture was the loss of Christian unity—the dissolution of the

community in which the peoples of the West had found their spiritual citizenship. The mere fact of this loss of unity created a neutral territory which gradually expanded till it came to include almost the whole of social life. The wars of religion and the long controversy concerning religious toleration, which produced such a prolific literature during the seventeenth century, especially in England, forced men to accept, at least as a practical necessity, the principle of common political and economic action by men who differed in their theological views and in their ecclesiastical allegiance; and when once men had admitted the principle that a heretic could be a good citizen (and even that an infidel could be a good man of business) they inevitably tended to regard this common ground of practical action as the real world, and the exclusive sphere of religion as a private world, whether of personal faith or merely private opinion.

In this way there arose the new liberal humanitarian culture which represents an intermediate stage between the religious unity of Christendom and a totally secularized world. On the continent it was at first the culture of an international elite, superimposed on the traditional culture of the people and, in Catholic countries at least, its permeation of society was accompanied by a violent revolutionary crisis. Only in England and North America did it proceed in the other direction—from below upwards—for there it found its inspiration not only in the rational idealism of the humanist tradition, but even more in the religious idealism of Puritanism with its conception of the Holy Community and of Christian Liberty.

But both these currents ultimately came together to form the liberal bourgeois culture of the nineteenth century, with its individualism and its Christian-humanitarian ethics, with its faith in reason and progress, in free trade and constitutional government. The place that religion held in this culture differed from country to country and from class to class. But on the whole I am inclined to think that there has been a tendency to underestimate its importance. In early Victorian England, for example, what struck the foreign

observer was not simply the amount of religious observance, but the fact that Christianity influenced public policy. Thus a contemporary French statesman writes :

Religious convictions are not with them mere rules for private conduct or simply intellectual indulgences : they enter into political life and influence the actions of public men, as conscience weighs upon single individuals. The dissenting sects are generally the first to stir themselves energetically for some object, which in their eyes religion commands them to pursue. The movement even extends through the entire Christian Church of the country, then into the different classes of civil society, and finally reaches the Government itself, which either coincides from approbation or resigns itself to follow. Thus the traffic in slaves has been abolished ; thus the spirit of peace has predominated in England until the last few years, gathering power at once from the wisdom of material interests and the force of religious convictions ; and imposed by the nation on the Government, which, on its part, during the progress of this interval, has not repulsed the public feeling but has voluntarily adopted it as the rule of state policy.\*

The fact that Liberal culture was founded on Christian moral values rendered it accessible to religious influences, even in a secular age. Nevertheless the spiritual elements in the Liberal culture were not strong enough to control the immense forces which had been released by the progress of the applied sciences and the new economic techniques. The advent of the machine, which was in a sense the result of the liberal culture, proved fatal to the liberal values and ideals, and ultimately to the social types which had been the creators and bearers of the culture.

The machine involved the increase of power, the concentration of power and the mechanization first of economic life and then of social life in general. It is true that in Britain and the United States the revolutionary effects of mechanization were reduced by the existence of unlimited colonial territories and foreign markets to absorb the new economic forces. It was only when mechanization was applied in the closed world of continental Europe that the revolutionary character

\* Guizot *Memoirs* II, p. 72. (English translation, 1859.)



became plain. And this was above all the case when it passed from the liberal bourgeoisie of the West into the hands of the bureaucratic monarchies of Eastern Europe, which approached the problems of the new order from the standpoint of power politics and military organization.

The great conflict, that has divided Europe in the twentieth century and has produced two world wars, is the result of the application of similar techniques in an opposite spirit and for opposite ends: science and mechanization being used, in the one case, in a commercial spirit for the increase of wealth; in the other, in a military spirit for the conquest of power. And as the conflict proceeds, the more complete becomes the mechanization of life, until total organization seems to be the necessary condition of social survival.

Liberal culture sought to avoid the danger of complete secularization by insisting on the preservation of a margin of individual freedom, which was immune from state control and to which, in theory at least, economic life was subordinated. And within the zone of individual freedom, religious freedom was the ultimate stronghold which defended the human personality. But the progress of mechanization, and the social organization which it entails, has steadily reduced this margin of freedom, until today in the totalitarian states, and only to a slightly less degree in the democratic ones, social control extends to the whole of life and consciousness. And since this control is exercised in a utilitarian spirit for political, economic and military ends, the complete secularization of culture seems inevitable. That religion still survives is due on the one hand to the fact that the technique of social control is still not fully developed, so that there are holes and corners in society and in the human personality which have escaped the process of regimentation; and on the other hand, because religion itself is often used by the state as an instrument for social control, in much the same way as Augustus revived the moribund rites and institutions of Roman paganism in order to add the prestige of antiquity and tradition to his new order. But a religion of this kind, which is being

used either as a means to a political end or, at best, as an instrument of culture, has lost its transcendent character and has thereby ceased to be a religion in the full sense.

Thus, as I suggested in the earlier part of this article, the progress of Western civilization by science and power seems to lead to a state of total secularization, in which both religion and freedom simultaneously disappear. The discipline that the machine imposes on man is so strict that human nature itself is in danger of being mechanized and absorbed into the material process. Where this is accepted as an ineluctable historical necessity we get a society that is planned in a strictly scientific spirit, but it will be a static and lifeless order, which has no end beyond its own conservation and which must eventually cause the weakening of the human will and the sterilization of culture. On the other hand, if a society rejects this scientific determinism, and seeks to preserve and develop human vitality within the framework of a totalitarian order, it is forced, as in Nazi Germany, to exploit the irrational elements in society and human nature so that the forces of violence and aggressiveness, which all the cultures of the past sought to discipline and control, break loose to dominate and destroy the world.

This is the dilemma of a secularized culture, and we cannot avoid it either by a humanitarian idealism which shuts its eyes to the irrational side of life, or by a religion of personal spirituality which attempts to escape into a private world which is rapidly being liquidated and drained away by the social planner and psychologist.

The only way to desecularize culture is by giving a spiritual aim to the whole system of organization, so that the machine becomes the servant of the spirit and not its enemy or its master. Obviously this is a tremendous task, but it is one that we cannot avoid facing in the near future. If culture is not to be dynamized from below by the exploitation of the sub-rational animal forces in human nature, it must be activized from above by being once more brought into relation with the forces of Divine power and wisdom and love. The faith in the possibility of this Divine action on the world



is the foundation of Christian thought. We believe that to every fresh need there is an answer of Divine grace, and that every historical crisis (which is a crisis of human destiny) is met by a new outpouring of the Spirit. The task of the Church and the task of the individual Christian is to prepare the way for such Divine action, to open the windows of the human mind and remove the curtains of ignorance and selfishness which keep humanity asleep. The Gospels teach us how religion can act as the ally of human stupidity and ill will, how it can blind men's eyes and stop their ears. But we cannot use the Gospels as an argument for the failure of religion. On the contrary, they prove that the power of the Spirit can break down any obstacle and overcome the most elaborate defences that human ingenuity can devise. And while the present situation in many respects seems more difficult than any in past history, it is at the same time also more unstable, less fixed in custom and less emotionally attached. In fact the mechanization of human life renders it more sensitive to spiritual influence in some respects than the old unorganized type of culture: at the present time this response is most evident where the forces in question are most evil, but clearly this cannot be the only possibility; and the great problem that we have to face is how to discover the means that are necessary to open this new world of apparently soulless and soul-destroying mechanism to the spiritual world which stands so near to it.

CHRISTOPHER DAWSON.

## A LETTER TO THE ENGLISH

THE cable despatched by the DUBLIN REVIEW reached me one November day : in other words, during the last month of a Brazilian spring. Spring in Brazil, so far, at least, as the highlands are concerned, is a wild and mournful season. I saw, staggering and lumbering along the track which leads to my small and solitary house, what I took to be some monstrous animal. It moved unevenly through a torrential downpour which resembled nothing so much as a maze of columns set slantwise in the earth. It creaked and groaned. At times the gasps which it emitted in its agony drowned the monotonous howling of the gale. It moved forward in a sort of luminous halo, surrounded, as it were, by a fine spray of iridescent moisture which blurred its outline, pitching towards me in a series of awkward lunges, now flung from side to side by the buffeting storm, now brought to a dead standstill in a surge of spume, then forging ahead once more in a kind of blind and aimless rush like the heavy, sideways movement of a wounded bull in its death agony. Suddenly, with a strident howl, it completed its journey, and came to a halt, covering me with a spatter of oil and mud. I recognized it as the car of a neighbouring farmer.

What it brought was not the cable, but merely the news that a cable had been sent from London, and was now waiting for me somewhere in the plain, beyond the mountains, or, more accurately, beyond that dense wall of mist which covered the deserted land for mile after mile with a cold and clinging shroud, so heavy that even the gale had failed to dissipate it, and rolled onwards from crest to crest as far as the distant sun-bathed bay of Rio de Janeiro. The friend who had received the cable had done his best to transmit the text by telephone, but the storm had interfered, and, in any case, the instrument was not a good one. If I started at once I might just be able to reach town before the road became impassable. From the look of the weather, it would be three days before the downpour lessened.

We set out, therefore, at once, but not in the car.

The flooded track roared in our wake like a cataract. The small, half-wild horses, backing their way forward in the teeth of the squall, with no thought for the grass which at other times they would have nibbled, concentrated their whole attention on finding a firm foothold in the sticky, moving mass for their unshod hooves. The little town, hidden in its narrow valley, seemed of the same kind and species as themselves. Anchored in the spongy soil, rearing its weak protection of slate and tile against the vast rush of waters, it fronted with stoic calm the assaults of Heaven, smothered in a sinister and yellow cloud, like a burning city.

In no matter what country you are, the telephone seems always to be suffering from a condition of chronic hoarseness. But in the tropics it coughs and splutters more than all its companions of other climes put together. The negro operator, too, was afflicted with a quite private and personal variety of coughing and spluttering. At long last, however, I just managed to make out that, from the other side of the world, and in an access of appealing curiosity, the DUBLIN REVIEW was asking for my views on St. Louis, King of France, and the honour of the French people.

## II

O men of England! These pages will reach you, I suppose, some time next December. Let me wish you a happy Christmas. Christmas is essentially the feast of childhood. I call down the blessings of childhood on the English nation. Hurrah for your childhood! Unfortunately, we French have never taken much pains to understand the English. In the fifteenth century our ancestors called them "Godons" and followed them in the streets with cries of "Ware tail!" because they thought that, as a punishment for their sins, they carried this devilish appendage hidden in their breeches. We never understood you English very well, though many of us did know, even then, that English children are among the loveliest in the world. A happy Christmas, then, to the children of England! We thought of you

all as "milords" with high collars and fat paunches, as men enjoying huge fortunes derived from cotton mills and West Indian sugar, as the people who had invented the pound sterling, the racehorse, and—one day, when you were feeling particularly liverish as a result of eating boiled mutton floating in a melancholy sea of potatoes—the umbrella. And now, for the last six months, day after day, you have been telling us a tale of marvels, a tale that no serious adult, no man of ability or experience, could possibly understand—a children's tale. Hurrah for you English children!

No one knows better than I do that, in the course of centuries, all the great stories of the world end by becoming children's tales. But this particular one has started its life as such, has become a children's tale on the very threshold of its existence. I mean that we can at once recognize in it the threefold visible sign of its nature. It has deceived the anticipations of the wise, it has humiliated the weak-hearted, it has staggered the fools. Last June all these folk from one end of the world to the other, no matter what the colour of their skins, were shaking their heads. Never had they been so old, never had they been so proud of being old. All the figures that they had swallowed in the course of their miserable lives as a safeguard against the highly improbable activity of their emotions, had choked the channels of circulation, and they were stuffed tight with statistics. They were ready to prove that with the Armistice of Rethondes the continuance of the war had become a mathematical impossibility. In short, they talked as though man had been made for mathematics and not mathematics for man. Some chuckled with satisfaction at the thought, but they were not the most dangerous, because hatred is a salt which has the property of preserving, for a time at least, old men from corruption. Others threatened us with the infection of pity, decomposing before our eyes, melting into impotent tears that spread an odour of the tomb. "Alone against the world," they said. "Why, what is that but a tale for children?" And that is precisely what it was—a tale for children. Hurrah for the children of England!

Men of England, at this very moment you are writing what public speakers like to describe in their jargon as one of the "greatest pages of history". I should like to say it more simply, in simpler words. But perhaps there are no simple words left, just as there is no honest bread. So much the worse! If the fine words have really become debased by too much use, we must make do with others; we must make do with words of freedom for free men! At this moment you English *are* writing one of the greatest pages of history, but I am quite sure that when you started, you meant it as a fairy tale for children. "Once upon a time there was a little island, and in that island there was a people in arms against the world . . ." Faced with such an opening as that, what old cunning fox of politics or business would not have shrugged his shoulders and closed the book? Your victory is a child's dream made real by grown men.

## III

To all you who may read these pages in six weeks or six months, or perhaps never—for who can foresee the fate of my modest words exposed to the dangers of so many thousand miles of sea?—I wish a happy Christmas. I am trying to wish it you with happiness in my heart, because happiness is a debt that the rest of the world owes you. Of what use would our sadness be to you? What benefit has man ever drawn from sadness? The only genuine sadness is born of shame: shame alone is sad because there is no cure for it. It is the only human misery from which death offers no hope of deliverance. I have not accepted shame, why then should I accept sadness? Let it be enough that I accept misfortunes. May they crush no one but ourselves; may they lay on us alone their heavy weight. That night has fallen on my country, I do not deny. It may well be that I shall never see the dawn: but the night holds no terror for me. I know that if we march on through the darkness we shall come at last to another morning. Whether or not I experience it in my own person is now of little

importance. My life has been governed not by seeing but by faith. What we see is but a loan, what we believe is given to us for ever. By faith alone can I possess. What has my own poor experience taught me to know of my country? Little enough. A few men, most of whom are now dead. A few shreds and tatters of history which have escaped the gnawing teeth of rats, or of villains—who are a thousand times more destructive than rats. Some country scenes the images of which will not survive the death of my eyes, for they are private to myself and incapable of transmission to others.

In many ways my country remains for me a mystery, the clue to which lies deep within myself. May it remain there! There are lesser peoples—the Italians, for instance—petty, envious, ill-conditioned races, who find in scorn and hatred a necessary tonic, who seek endlessly to impose their identity on others, because in their hearts they know that they are for ever trying to discover it, but will never succeed. My race is too old and too illustrious to feel the need of imposing itself. It has but to call itself by its proper name. I bear its name, the name which it gave me. I bear it not like a feather in a hat, not like gold lace upon my sleeve, not like a Papal title. I neither earned it nor paid money for it. It is not something other than myself. Myself and my country's name are one and indivisible. I try to bear that name, as I bear the name of Catholic, with due humility, that is to say, naturally: as naturally and as simply as I can. To be humble does not mean to seek occasions of humiliation. To seek such occasions is dangerous and prideful. It is enough to be oneself, neither more nor less, and to live in the eye of God. I must not be turned aside from my goal by any thought of what the name of Frenchman meant in the days before I was born, of what it may mean in days yet to come, of what it means now for others. When I shall have laboured to the end, and faced that end, then perhaps it will be given to me to understand more perfectly. Then perhaps I shall see, but only after I have believed. Like all those others of my race who went before me, I shall know what France is only when I



have left this world behind. But before I rejoin them, my modest task accomplished, I shall know, yes, most certainly I shall know, what it means to be a Frenchman.

## IV

I must apologize for writing in a tone of such intimacy. In truth, it is the only way of writing that I know. I did not start writing until I was over forty, and the extreme kindness which I have experienced at the hands of the public during the last eleven years, has never succeeded in convincing me that I am a professional author. Whatever value my work may have, it is not that of a well-run theatre to which an audience comes for entertainment, in which I set myself the task of providing for that entertainment, or, in other words, of earning my daily bread. My work is myself, my private house. I speak to you, pipe in mouth, my jacket still damp with rain, my boots steaming in front of the fire. When I set myself to address you I do not even take the trouble to go from one room to another. I do my writing in the common living-room, on the table at which, in an hour or two, I shall be eating my evening meal with my wife and my children. We cannot even meet, you and I, on the common ground of a library, for I possess no books. Between us there is, for communication, nothing but a penny exercise book. No man puts lies into a penny exercise book. In anything that costs so little I can write only the truth.

If my language seems to you too intimate, reflect that it is the language of a man who, seeking revenge only from a future which he may never see, can speak to you as though he were already dead. I say revenge and not victory. For victory is in *your* hands, but the revenge for which I look is in the tiny fist of the child in the cradle who cares as yet for neither you nor me, or of the child, perhaps, who is not yet born. It is not the revenge for which my country once looked after Sedan; not revenge on the enemy. It is the revenge of the France of tomorrow on the France of today, of the son on the

father. We are the generation that has known not defeat but wrong. It were better, perhaps, that we should pass into forgetfulness, ourselves and the wrong together ; that at one stroke we should slip from men's minds. But that, alas, is not possible. Far be it from us to wish that our sons, for our sake, should weep for the wrong done us as for a misfortune. That it is a misfortune, none will deny, but our children must not know it. They must not pity us, lest one day they be tempted to pity themselves, and so, in their turn, give up the fight. There must be no open sore in French hearts. It is our will that the scar be harder than stone.

## V

I am moved to write now by no impulse of revolt or bitterness. On the contrary, I am conscious of a feeling of deep peace. If I write it for your eyes, men of England, I am not even sure that you will understand me. But as a race you know how to be silent when silence is necessary, and I feel sure that you will not insult me with your pity. It is well not to want to be understood too soon ; it is well not to want to be understood at all, for that is probably the surest way of ensuring understanding at the last. All I shall try to do is to tell you, as sincerely and as simply as I can, what precisely it is that an old cripple of the last war, a Frenchman, is thinking today in the loneliness of exile. I shall not speak in the name of my country, with my hand pressed to my heart in the manner of spouting politicians. No one has ever had the right to speak in the name of my country, except, maybe, its heroes and its saints, and they were too busy doing things to want to speak. I don't flatter myself that I can make you understand France. I am not sure that I understand her myself. I don't really even try to understand her, because she leaves me no time for such an exercise. She carries me along with her on the wind of that adventure that is without beginning or end because it is an adventure of the spirit, and an adventure of the spirit undertaken by men who, more than most,



have a firm sense of reality, a strong sense of the flesh. That contradiction which ought to have meant our destruction has always been our salvation: it is the central paradox of our history. If we pondered it too long we should never get any further. We know well that this contradiction has lain at the root of all our misfortunes, but we know, too, that we can only resolve it by striding forward, or, who knows, that others may resolve it for us. And who cares? We are Christendom on the march. That is a truth which the world will not willingly believe, because the world moves more quickly than we do, but not towards the same goal. We are Christendom on the march, knowing only too well, despite the flattery of others, despite our own vain-glory, that it is by no means a triumphal march with bugles blowing and flags flying. Why will not the world judge us on the evidence of our history? That history has been one long tale of patience. No people has ever more patiently accomplished its destiny, more patiently built up its land, more patiently retrieved its errors and its follies. We are a race of peasants and artisans working hard for six days in every week. But the world thinks of us only as we are on the seventh, when we put on our Sunday clothes, fill our glasses, and contentedly watch our young people dancing.

We are Christendom on the march to the Kingdom of God, but not with empty hands. It would never have occurred to us to go so far when there is such a lot to be done at home, but since, apparently, the good God has chosen us to carry Liberty, Equality and Brotherhood to people whose homes we cannot even recognize for certain on the map—well, we had better get on with the job, had better get busy saving the world, on condition, be it understood, that we preserve at the same time our fields and houses, our herds and the few savings that we may have tucked away with the village lawyer. We are Christendom on the march, but a Christendom that goes on its flat feet, dragging behind it a mass of baggage, because it holds fast to its few possessions and does not want to lose anything by the wayside. We are Christendom on the march to a kingdom of Equality, Liberty and

Brotherhood, in which sometimes we find it difficult to believe, because we do not like to believe in what we cannot see, and we have never seen it yet. And so we take our time. There is no hurry. We must save our shoe-leather if we can, for repairs are costly.

Oh, of course, there are bright lads among us who gallop up and down the column, laughing at the girls and breaking their necks with never a thought but for mirth. We are fond of them, and proud of them, recognizing in them many of our national characteristics, seeing in them the part of ourselves that comes to life when we have taken a glass too much. They may be fine horsemen, but they don't get to the end of the journey any quicker than we do, and in the course of the centuries they have been guilty of a thousand glaring follies which we have had to make good by our obscure and daily labours. It was they who brought defeat on us at Agincourt and Crecy ; they who spent our treasure to conquer the Kingdom of Naples, because the girls of that land seemed fair to them, and who brought back from the adventure nothing but debts and disease. They charge with mettlesome fury on the enemy, but have a way of coming back as quickly as they went. Because of them, our history seems to others frivolous, though in reality no history that was ever written is more full of high seriousness, tenderness and humanity. Because of them and of their caracoles ahead, behind, and all around, the world thinks that we never move forward. Seeing them gallop back to the main body in confusion, it believes that we are in retreat. True, we move slowly, but if we really stopped moving altogether, the world would soon notice it, the heart of the world would wither.

## VI

And once more I am without hope that such words will be understood today. A time will come for such understanding, but by then the words themselves will have been long dead. If they seem presumptuous, I ask my readers' pardon. It *can* only be a matter of seeming,

for in this time of shame, lying to myself is the last thing of which I am capable. When I say that the heart of the world will wither, I do not mean that it will cease to beat, though I am not at all sure that the modern world could not get on perfectly well without any heart at all. We are no better and no worse than other men. True, we do not conceal our vices, because our form of Christianity is as little touched with pharisaism as it is possible to find, but our vices are far less a cause of scandal than our follies, of which not the least persistent is that habit of ours of never saying no when others want us to minister to their pleasure. We are always trying to please, and that because by so doing we can conveniently mask that other desire lying deep within our hearts, a desire to be loved. We want to be loved so passionately that we dare not admit it; we try to be loved so hard that we never succeed, and are driven back on just saying baldly that we are, and perhaps believing it. We appear to be tender and cynical, sincere and boastful, turn and turn about. And as a result of all this the world has grown to mistrust us. The humble fire which we tend so lovingly upon our hearts from generation to generation, is little more than a faint glow beneath the ashes; yet the world mistrusts it and wonders sometimes whether it will not, after all, set the earth ablaze. Alone among the nations we have taken our stand firmly within the confines of the New Testament, have set our hearts on nothing less than the New Law of Heaven and Earth. We have known what it is to have power, and there have been times when we were feared, but no sooner have we bred terror in the hearts of our adversaries than we discover that what we really want is to make ourselves beloved. With that end in view we have lavished more heroism, have been guilty of greater follies, than would have been necessary for the winning of ten empires. But unfortunately, at the last moment our hearts have always failed us. Discouraged by having to seek endlessly a goal that for ever just eludes us, we let ourselves be carried away once more by the wish to please. That we may please at all costs, since we cannot compass the greater feat, we push

forward on to the stage our orators and our showmen, our singers and our dancers, our brainless soldiers with their fierce and blond moustaches, our aged Céliménes, and our no less outmoded middle-class demagogues. And when we run out of these figures of fun, the foreigner invents them for us according to the recipe we have ourselves provided. He invented, for instance, the poilu of 1914, that music-hall hero, all sentiment and bunkum, who was supposed to joke his way through the war, whereas in reality the war was a serious matter for us, a business which we saw through in a spirit of patience, decency and humility, the same spirit in which we set about earning our children's bread—which, of course, it was, bread for our children which we earned with blood and sweat, only to see it now thrown into the gutter.

## VII

And the men of my generation will never pick it up again. Oh, my English readers! Perhaps among you there are some whom I met in former years between Loos and Vimy, or later still much later, in a dark and windy March, on those frighteningly empty, those gaping roads round Albert and Montdidier. We are the same now as we were then. To you at least I can speak from my heart. I shall never pick up that bread which my countrymen have thrown into the gutter, shall never take it again between my aged hands, nor wipe it clean on a corner of my old trench coat to which the smell of death managed so long to cling. I shall never taste more of that bread which once served as food to the Old Man of the Armistice no less than to me. I have made myself an exile from my country, and I can make myself an exile, too, from the victory that once was ours. I left my country two years ago during another dark and threatening autumn. I left it on the eve of Munich, for if it was still a place where a free man could live, it was no longer a place where he could breathe freely or even live with honour. What I mean is that a free man can always manage to exist under an

organized tyranny because the risks he runs give to his life a certain nobility. But the kind of loneliness to which a Frenchman saw himself condemned in 1938 entailed no risks, nothing but a sense of crushing humiliation. There was no enemy in the land, and yet there was nothing else. Treason as yet had not shown her face, nor was she known by her true name. But she had weakened French opinion wherever it was to be found; with cunning and disguised persistence she had broken down the nerve centres of the French people. No doubt the newspapers—most of them in treason's pay—were still bawling from stentorian lungs, but their sole purpose was to drown the terrifying silence of a nation which no longer believed in itself, which was slowly feeling itself severed from its roots.

In such conditions, though the word Liberty might still figure in the laws of the Republic, it was no longer a reality in the consciences of men. It meant nothing. A free word fell dead as soon as uttered, like a bird trying to fly in a vacuum. I left my country because, having nothing any more to give it, I was ashamed to take anything of its hands. I left it without even knowing for certain in what country of the Americas I should try to build my home anew, or how I should manage to feed my family. All I desired was to hide my shame in some lost corner of those vast and limitless lands. It was not in the rich cities of the coast that men would meet me. Since coming here I have not lived the life of the literary playboy on a lecture tour; I have not lined my exile's nest, nor have I made my unhappiness a motley to the view. When, one day in June, the news of our dishonour reached me, I was far to the west, way out beyond the last railway station, where there are neither trains nor roads, in the heart of the Brazilian *sertão*, that land of dwarfed and stunted forest where the only paths are those made by wild cows. In that country there is no such thing as dining out, but a man has time to question his conscience and to listen to the answers that it gives. Our little wireless set, run off a battery, so old that no one knew its age, and impossible to protect against the ravages of ants as big as wasps, was

constantly being interrupted by shrill and melancholy whinings like those of a dog tormented by fleas. The daily storm beat against the earthen walls of our house, and struck with a heavy, ominous sound upon its thatched roof. Outside, in the "corral", the tree trunks shone red in the rain. We were all of us standing round the ridiculous contraption that looked so like a broken-winded toad, for all the world as though it had been the grotesque and formless image of our despair.

## VIII

You, my English friends, are asking where we shall find salvation. Do not, I beg, put the question to that part of our national soul which is for all to see, which all can understand, or think to understand. Do not look for salvation to that jolly, bouncing, faintly absurd France which is symbolized by the Gallic cock. The cock is a stupid bird. It is silly to make of it the emblem of a nation whose ancient arms were three fleur-de-lys on an azure field. Remember this, my English friends: we are a people whom misfortune does not harden. We are never more human than when things go ill. That is the secret of the inflexible weakness which keeps us alive, no matter what befall. While I heard issuing from that hideous mechanical lung the sentence condemning our former victory to death, I had already forgotten that such a victory had ever, in any way, belonged to me. The only comfort I could find in all my pain was in the thought that we, my generation, possessed nothing; that fortune's dower to us had been but empty hands and full graveyards. The world thinks of us Frenchmen as proud, yet as a race we are humble and devout, knowing that night follows day with healing on its wings, and day night: that the sins committed in the dusk are already pardoned when the morning star gives promise of the dawn. My English friends, I am trying to talk to you now in the name of those whom our French kings were wont to call so charmingly "the small folk", the "little men", because to them, when



trouble looms, when all else fails, the proudest among us, however great his birth, returns as to the home of his childhood, and childhood itself. They are older than any of our old families, nobler than the men of bluest blood: or rather, I should say, they alone are noble among a crowd of serfs disguised as their betters. The dominant bourgeoisie may have transmitted to our "little folk" some of its vices, but it has never corrupted their heart. They have never been so far deceived as to mistake the sign it bears for that of their ancient Lords, and no power in the world can make them bend their backs before the arrogant yet timid masters who fear them even while they profess to scorn. I shall be told that there are other elements of the nation of less worth than these. But our demagogue politicians would never have attained their present power if they had confined their efforts to exploiting the poverty and wretchedness of France. They are what they are because they have set themselves to play on the pride of the "little folk", to treat them as kings—and every king has his courtiers, his flatterers, his licensed jesters. They are reproached, these folk, with being revolutionary, as though it were possible to expect a conservative, that is to say a static, attitude in a people that has always so many faults to redress, and can only redress them by keeping on the move, a people of the soil that for a thousand years has never ceased from sowing its fields, and drinking, when the last ear is garnered, to the harvest next to come. Nothing will ever stop the forward march of such a people, nothing will ever break its faith nor kill in it the power of hope. Its courage will never grow less, and that because its courage and its hope are one. Whatever our flatterers may say, this courage of ours is not elegant, but it is strong. It is not a weapon so much as a tool—and a tool that has been oftentimes proved. Oh, I know, we have had our Bouvines, our Fontenoy, our Valmy, but they were no more than episodes, pretty pictures in a book, flowers in a field; and it is not the flowers in a field that count. One does not look to the poppy and the cornflower for grain. No, but the people of France, with their simple courage and their homely tools, have

triumphed over every ordeal, or, to speak more truly, they have known how to *use* every ordeal. They *used* the Hundred Years' War; they *used* the heresy of Luther; they *used* the fanaticism of Spain, that bloodstained clerical monarchy which replaced the Cross by the gibbet, and tomorrow they will *use* our shame. Not only will they avenge themselves upon it; they will use it. They will use those responsible for our shame, and they will use the shame itself. They will take their time, working patiently day after day, for they never look back, never go over work already done, but ask each evening in the simplicity of their souls what they must do to accomplish tomorrow's task. "Oh, my Mother, is this the end?" asked little St. Teresa of Lisieux on her death-bed, of the Prioress. "What must I do to die? I shall never know how to die . . ." It is words like these rather than the fine sentiments of Plutarch's heroes that, in every age, have set the standards of our country flying in the breeze.

## IX

If you cannot understand that, you will never know the first thing about us. "What," you may ask, "has a little Carmelite to do with the standards of France?" Well, what, if it comes to that, have three lilies on an azure field to do with the oldest fighting nation of Europe? Who can explain why it is that the Romans bore us? Why do the hairy giants who make the hearts of young Germany beat so fast seem to us nothing but heavy, awkward louts? The former seem always to be posing for their statues, and if it is true that they were demi-gods, why, then, couldn't they leave us in peace? They had a deep scorn of that life which we love so dearly, which we find so beautiful, so sweet. How could they have the effrontery to take leave of it with so remote an air, as though they were bidding farewell to a stranger? As to the latter, why had they always to be rolling their wild-beast eyes, why had they always to be drinking beer out of skulls? Why did they preach scorn of death, a



custom that to us seems one degree more crude than the custom of preaching scorn of life? If they so hated their enemy that they had perforce to slake their thirst from his skull, where was the merit in fighting him since they went into battle drunk? To die drunk is the worst disgrace that a man can know. None can claim the name of hero who has not made his vigil and passed the sacred portal with calm and seemly gait. And if he cannot do that he had far better weep frankly like a man and not go about roaring and foaming like a beast, for life is never too great for tears . . . "What must I do to die? I shall never know how to die." Just so must Jeanne d'Arc have thought on that morning of the 30 May, 1429. What we find so touching in that childish cry is precisely the fact that it expresses no scorn of death. Rather does it accept death with a scrupulous politeness, a sort of discreet timidity, as though moved by a fear of doing it some wrong. It is the sign by which we recognize the accomplishment, the achievement, the perfection of a species of heroism whose servants and whose witnesses in this world we vaguely know ourselves to be. What matters that it is the cry of a child? From such childish words our men are born.

A great French writer, who unfortunately traces his descent from inferior Arabic and Levantine stock, M. Ch. Maurras, waxed very indignant on one occasion over the fact that, as he maintained, the young people of France, though they take a natural pride in the victories of their country's arms, seem to have a predilection for those tales in which great heroes are defeated, for the fights in which all is lost save honour. This view he regarded as a monstrous perversion, not (as no doubt he imagined) on logical grounds, but as a direct result of his own racial inheritance. For him the word "victory" connotes pillage, loot, and a vision of captured women exposed naked in the market-place. The truth is, of course, that young Frenchmen have no particular preference for defeat over victory. But they are perfectly right in holding that a hero is never more himself than in the hour of disaster, and that war would be nothing but a disgusting tale of slaughter if it did not sometimes have

the effect of increasing the stature of a man by transforming him into a martyr. Our one really popular epic, the *Song of Roland*, is a story of defeat. It glorifies a *beaten* youth, and shows him dying with his face to the enemy, one hand raised to Heaven, the other humbly seeking that of his friend. For ten centuries this legend has stirred the hearts of the boys and girls of my race. The choice of Roland is the ineluctable choice of the French conception of Honour.

## X

I am speaking to you, my listeners, from the depths of a double exile. The immense expanse of sea which separates me from my country can always be crossed; what cannot be crossed is the barrier set up by the memory of a Great Wrong. I could not, it is true, write down the name of any of the defeats which mark our history without blushing: but the defeat under which we now labour is the only one in which everything has been lost. Is my testimony the less valid for being made in the shadow, beneath, as it were, the very eyes of the Great Wrong? I make no pretence that Honour is a God, certainly not a particularly French God. Honour has kept men company through the ages; he may have been born in Heaven, but none would now remark his angelic ancestry. By dint of sharing our poverty so long, Honour has come to have our very look and qualities: Honour is a sinner like the rest of us. But if he is a sinner he is a ransomed sinner. French Honour is a Christian Honour. He has known the blessing of Baptism. He has forgotten that centuries ago he was nothing but a fierce and bloodstained idol. True, he has much with which to reproach himself. There lies heavy on his conscience the memory of looted cities, raped women, cellars of wine drunk dry. He can echo the words of La Hire to his confessor: "I have done all the things that men commonly do in war", and for all these things the comfortable Christians, the Scribes and the Pharisees, choose to look at him askance. But though

the spirit of violence may have led him into many extremes, he has never wholly forgotten the baptismal font. He casts a longing eye backwards to the Holy Water, the white shift, and the words of absolution. There is a greater sense of humility in him than in many rich communicants who sit on the foremost benches at church. "Oh, come," you may say. "Whoever heard of Honour being humble?" I repeat that he is. And his origins were as humble as himself, for he was no gift of kings. Rather did he come from the innermost recesses of our people's heart, with the whole conception of chivalry. He has flourished on the simple courage of our folk like a red rose on an old briar-stem. The behaviour of great heroes has kept him humble. What do we learn of him from our moralists, our theologians, our professors of psychology? If we want to read his lineaments aright it is to our heroes that we must go. Our heroes were neither giants, supermen, nor Judges of Israel, but very human men, so human that we have learned to think of them as neighbours with whom we can converse as friends. They never regarded themselves as heroes or as saints, though often they were both. The greatest among them still come to us carrying their crowns of glory in their hands, wearing their ordinary, everyday clothes, as though anxious not to intimidate the little boys of France. Before ever we knew the name of Honour or his distinguishing marks, these things were already deeply embedded in our childhood. They have remained there always, for of such is their nature.

We have seen St. Louis, sword in hand, confronting the Saracens upon the beach at Damietta; but we have seen him, too, dying in sackcloth and ashes, praying for the remission of his sins. We know that he never turned his back upon a living foe, but we know, too, that he put water in his wine—yes, water in his wine—for a penitence, and that neither he nor his charming bride ever asserted themselves before Blanche of Castille who, from all accounts, must have been a difficult woman to have as a mother. We have seen Jeanne d'Arc at the taking of Tourelles, but we have seen her, too, as the old Lord of Gamaches saw her once with his very eyes, falling from

the Curtain Wall with an arrow in her breast, dragging down ten foemen with her, while he hurled himself forward in her defence, old warrior that he was, grasping his double-handed axe. But we have seen her again, as you English saw her, among the Bishops and learned men at her trial in Rouen, her poor cheeks hollow with fever, the sweat standing out on her obstinate little face, her mouth trembling, when in the stifling air of the audience chamber, after days and days of bullying, she suddenly gave up the struggle, tendered her sacred word and swore her oath. Fair flower of chivalry, "you could never," she cried, "do to me what you threaten, without damning yourselves, soul and body, to all eternity!" What a cry of distress was there, the cry of a poor tormented child! One would willingly kiss the very air through which it rang. Through all the centuries to come the furious barking of the guns of France will ever answer to that cry of innocence. For one short moment the incarnate Lily of the royal oriflamme, the shining sword of France, the saint of our country, may have doubted herself, but who, after her, could ever doubt our honour?

## XI

You see us now, my English readers, as you saw us once before. We have denied our Voices. "By St. Catherine and St. Margaret God has communicated to me his great pity for this treason to which I made consent when, to save my life, I abjured the truth and made recantation. He tells me that for the sake of my life I have incurred the peril of damnation . . . If I denied that these words are from God I should be damned, for of God they surely are. My Voices have told me that in confessing that I acted wrongly I have committed a grave fault. What I said, I said from fear of the fire. . . ." It is true that we have denied our Voices. It is true that we have denied ourselves. But remember this, the girl who after long hours of exhausting cross-examination, weak and uncertain, was tempted to a moment's surrender,

was the same girl who a few weeks previously had rejected the offer of ransom made her by John of Luxembourg. ". . . In God's name, you must be mocking me! I know well that the English will kill me, thinking after my death to possess the kingdom of France. But were there a hundred thousand more Godons than there are, they should never conquer it."

We have denied our Voices, and each one of us may believe, as Jeanne herself believed, that it was from fear of the fire. But she feared neither steel nor fire, nor any danger of this world, until the doctors and the casuists had succeeded in troubling her conscience. It was doubt, and not the fear of the fire, that overcame her. No foeman's blow would ever have weakened her, but she bowed her knee before "her reverend Fathers in God". The fate of our people, my English friends, closely resembles hers. The conscience of our people was troubled and betrayed, and those who betrayed it were just those who pretended to be its guides. It denied itself, true: but not until those guides had first, themselves, denied it.

I wish to bear witness in its name. I cannot boast the honour of being its servant in the sense that our demagogue politicians use the word, and for that reason I know its meaning better than it does itself. My feelings about the national conscience are not those of that fraction of the bourgeoisie which alternately exploits it and weeps sentimental tears over its corpse. That word "bourgeoisie" means nothing to me. It is nothing but a medley of prejudices and habits of thought, many of them perfectly respectable, but without any deep-seated connexion with our traditions and our past. The French bourgeoisie is not a new thing. It is that Third Estate which defined its own nature, one hundred and fifty years ago, in the words of Siéyès. "What," he asked, "is the Third Estate?—nothing. What might it be?—everything." And that is precisely what the French bourgeoisie has become: everything. It destroyed our monarchy, it broke down the structure of a society which had lasted for a thousand years, it absorbed or corrupted that small nobility of land and arms whose

poverty it disdained, not realizing that by doing so it was striking a fatal blow, not at a few decent, inoffensive people who had aroused its jealousy, but at the military and peasant tradition which had made our nation great. It laid hands on the domain of France, mortgaged it at far more than its true value, reshaped it according to its own desires, and died as a result of the very completeness of its own victory. Today it is nothing but a meeting ground for those proletarians who have escaped from, and despise, the class which gave them birth.

## XII

The bourgeoisie despises the people, but it fears them. I don't blame it for its scorn, but I do blame it for its fear. For it means that the nation is divided. The real trouble with the French bourgeoisie today is that while it is rich enough and powerful enough to render useful service to the community, its origins are too base to permit of its rising to a conception of disinterested service, of service performed for the sake of the country and not for the sake of money. It makes a great to-do about all the grand "values" which it sets out to defend, but you will notice that in speaking of them it always uses the possessive pronoun. It speaks, rather naively, of OUR Law and Order, of OUR Property, of OUR Justice. It regards anyone who presumes to protect the people against its claims as a traitor to his country. He who defends the people is held to flatter it, and thereby to degrade himself. He who flatters the bourgeoisie by becoming its champion is considered to have brought honour on himself. Because I write as I do, the intellectuals in the pay of the bourgeoisie try to make me believe that I am a demagogue. In fact, I am a man of the Old France, or, more simply, just of France; for a thousand years of history are not to be wiped out by a hundred and fifty years of wretched fumbling. Old France is still alive in the France of today. It is merely a matter of having the will to recognize it. I do.

I rate the people neither above nor below their true



value. I consider that I owe certain duties, and enjoy certain privileges. They are no great matter, certainly, but such as they are, it is only decent that I should employ them in the service of those who do not share my enjoyment of them. As a matter of fact, it is rather pointless to talk of privileges today. "There are no more privileges: there are only duties." That was the ruling principle of the French popular monarchy, the idea of which still claims my loyalty.

No one realizes better than I do the faults and errors of which the French people have been guilty; but no consideration, whether of persons, parties or class, shall ever keep me from saying that the people of France were not primarily responsible for the disasters which have overcome my country. Nothing shall keep me from denouncing the fatal breach which, after 1918, developed between the mass of the French nation and its privileged few, nor from refusing to admit that the "people" were the authors of this breach. I accuse the privileged classes of France of having betrayed the people by making them doubt themselves and the things they loved. I do not say that this act of betrayal was always consciously performed. What I do say is that the privileged classes of France, in order to justify their inability to fulfil the promise which they made at the time of the last war that they would organize the peace even at the cost of necessary sacrifices to themselves—a price not too high for the great work which lay to their hands—have, since 1929, taken up towards the rest of the nation an attitude marked by perpetual fault-finding, backstairs defeatism, and even of cynical contempt. The People of France believed themselves to be fighting for Right, Justice and Universal Peace. Well, what happened? Those whose better education and greater culture they were ready to respect, merely laughed in their faces and affected to regard all those fine ideals as so much nonsense. Having failed to get anything for themselves out of the war, they now turned round and said that war was nothing but a gigantic fraud, and the people, hearing this, began sadly to wonder why, in that case, these same leaders had driven them into making it. They thought they had been



fighting for Democracy, only to find the word laughingly dismissed as dowdy and out of date by the fine men and women of whom they had been taught to think as "intellectuals". These same intellectuals, eaten up with pride and impotence, lacked the humanity to understand, or even to try to understand, what it was that the people meant by their rather simple use of the word. It never occurred to them that there is something precious and fragile about the illusions of a great people, or that if one lops them away, one runs the risk of killing the roots from which their hopes draw sap. In their blind egotism these wretched fools tormented the conscience of the French people by overwhelming them with ironical questions to which they were in no way fitted to reply. Incapable of finding a clue through so many subtle and contradictory definitions, they simply gave up the whole game. Their anger found a victim not in those who had failed to give them Right, Justice and Universal Peace, but in those very ideas themselves which henceforward they professed to regard as ridiculous and Utopian conceptions. The idea which had given birth to the League of Nations was fine and appropriate, and wholly in accordance with our old Christian tradition: but those who wanted to put it into practice—did they ever really want to?—were without the ability to do so. It was not at them, however, that the people mocked, but at the idea lying behind the League. The abject conspiracy against the soul of my country, against its faith and its hope, against, one might almost say, its innocence and purity, has never been more dramatically underlined than by the solemn substitution of the new formula: "Work, Family and Country" for the ancient motto "Liberty, Equality, Brotherhood"—as though one was a contradiction of the other.

When the judges of Jeanne d'Arc decided to condemn her finally, they were determined that she should incriminate herself. They had made her swear that she would give up wearing a man's clothes. Then, during the night, they removed her woman's clothes, and thus compelled her to put on her former accoutrements. At once they accused her of perjury. Something not unlike

this has happened to the French people. They were robbed of their illusions, their hopes, the humble human enthusiasms which had been to them the bread of life for a hundred years, of an ideology which, no doubt, contained many errors, but which long use had made almost wholly harmless, and might, at long last, have been adjusted to the profound traditions of their race. Then, deprived of all that had kept them warm, their teeth chattering with cold, they suddenly found themselves enveloped in the coarse woollen pullovers of the Popular Front, while at the same time their ears were deafened by all the hypocrites round shouting shame on them for wearing it. The word Bolshevik was deliberately and disingenuously attached to a people which, from 1914 to 1918, had given evidence of an extraordinary power of discipline and of heroic unselfishness. Those whose intent it was to break up the national unity in the interests of Messrs. Mussolini and Hitler, proceeded to accuse the people of having first broken it themselves.

As much as ten years ago I denounced the privileged classes of France for thus refusing to shoulder their responsibilities. That of which they have been guilty is treason, because, up to the very last moment when all was surrendered, they have never ceased speaking the language of "honour". What was nothing less than cowardice they now call moderation, wisdom, prudence. In sober truth cowardice is the one fatal risk, the only imprudence for which there is no salvation. They have referred to themselves as "preservers", and, indeed, the word is truer of them than of most people, truer than it has ever been before, since they have "preserved" what they have preserved, for the enemy. They have "preserved" an empire which they hope to devour at their ease later on. And yet, that is not the worst of their treachery. I have a still heavier charge to lay against them, that of undertaking in the interests of the enemy a "spiritual revival" which they were too unskilled or too cowardly to undertake when it was still a practicable possibility. They have been guilty before the bar of the nation of having claimed to restore Work, the Family

and Religion, before first restoring Honour. They put themselves forward as Doctors in Christian ethics. They preach penitence, but their words mean nothing: they offer absolution without restitution or reparation. They respect the Letter while they betray the Spirit. What do I care what names they choose to give themselves, even when those names are such as I should feel it an honour to bear? I know that salvation will never come from them. If the men like them had triumphed in the fifteenth century I should have been fated to become an Englishman, in the sixteenth, a Spaniard. If they were to triumph today I should have to become a German. When, on the 23 February, 1429, young Jeanne set out with Jean de Metz and Bertrand de Poulengy on the first stage of her journey to Chinon, the privileged classes of France had already thrown in their lot with the enemy, acquiescing in the New Order, the New Europe, the "Lebensraum" preached by the England of the Plantagenets. The most junior student of theology would have found it child's play to prove, in a series of perfect syllogisms, that it was to the interest of God, of the Church, of all upright folk and of every sound principle, to come to terms with the conqueror. But, Heaven be thanked, neither Jeanne nor the people of France had skill in arguing with casuists. And that is why, sooner or later, in the silence of her heart, Jeanne heard her Voices, and why to Frenchmen comes at last the whispered comfort of their country's saints.

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## BLAKE AND WORDSWORTH

IN the *Vision* W. B. Yeats said of those spirits which he ascribed to the sixteenth phase of the Moon (called the Positive Man), among whom he included Blake, that "There is always an element of frenzy, and almost always a delight, in certain glowing or shining images of concentrated force; in the heart; in the human form in its most vigorous development; in the solar disc; in some symbolic representation of the sexual organs; for the being must brag of its triumph over its own incoherence." The last clause, in its relation to Blake, is a comment of genius; it is a description of the *Prophetic Books*. There is a certain likeness to some aspects of our modern world about it, and that both on the totalitarian and the democratic sides; there is certainly an expression of a temptation common to all of us, though all of us have not so high an energy as Blake, certainly not a poetic energy. To brag of a triumph over our own incoherence is natural and impossible; incoherence can only be solved by being reduced to co-inherence, and of that, since it is not ours, it is impossible to brag.

But true though the phrase is as a comment, it is but a comment; it is not a final judgement. The whole attraction of the *Prophetic Books* is that there is an element of co-inherence in them as well as of incoherence. For all the labour spent in their analysis we have not perhaps yet discovered the proper way of poetic approach. Most commentators are compelled to approach them by precisely the way which Blake himself seems most strongly to have denounced—the method of detached intellectual analysis, of prolonged explanation. The great figures of the myth do indeed sit about, in those commentaries, chained in a frozen land: Urizen rules over them. Swinburne (were his prose easily readable) was at least trying another way; and Mr. Yeats was, of course, of another kind. But in general it is so; and in general there is every excuse. Blake depended on his myths being exciting; and alas, the sound itself is too monotonous. We are defeated by the sameness of the rhythms, the unintelligibility of the tale.

If we ask, then, by what means we may avoid (if we think it worth while) Blake's brag and reduce the incoherence to co-inherence, another method suggests itself. It is a consideration of the other great poetic achievements of the Romantics. This is desirable, so long as our criticism does not dishearten those others instead of heartening Blake's. Wordsworth in the *Prelude* did something of what Blake asserted he was doing. The *Prelude* is as much about man's destiny as the *Prophetic Books*, and its conclusion not so unlike. Blake, for all the rude things he said about Wordsworth (but he was equally silly about Milton), might not have refused to be called a "Prophet of Nature"—meaning by Nature what Wordsworth meant, and not buttercups and sunsets ("the secondary grace"). He himself never exalted the Imagination higher than did Wordsworth. "All things are comprehended in these Eternal Forms in the Divine Body of the Saviour, the True Vine of Eternity, the Human Imagination, who appeared to me as coming to judgement among His Saints and throwing off the Temporal that the Eternal might be established." So Blake; and Wordsworth:

This spiritual love acts not, nor can exist  
Without Imagination; which, in truth,  
Is but another name for absolute power  
And clearest insight, amplitude of mind,  
And Reason in its most exalted mood

The last line marks the distinction between the true Romantic and the pseudo-Romantic. The true Romantic, maintaining the importance of what Blake calls "the visionary Fancy or Imagination", admits and believes that the holy intellect is part of it. Nor, whatever in his haste he sometimes implied, did Blake ever refuse this test; the *Prophetic Books* themselves break out continually into epigrams of philosophy which pass it triumphantly. The myth may be dim to us; the morals are not. But in Wordsworth the fragmentary morals of the myth have been too often exalted at the expense of the myth (so to call it). Both of those noble poets have been said to repudiate "the meddling intel-

lect"; in so far as they did, it was precisely the *meddling* intellect which they discarded. The power which they felt and believed was defined by Wordsworth in the grand climax of the *Prelude*—"the *feeling* intellect". That climax has been a little neglected precisely because it does not "brag of its triumph over its own incoherence"; on the contrary, it is neither incoherent nor boastful. But it arrives, quietly and passionately, at its end; and its end is the end at which Blake's verse, after another manner, aimed.

The *Prelude* is alive with many themes—among them the themes of Power and of Solitude. The *Prophetic Books* are alive with the same themes, again among others. But where Solitude is, on the whole, unanalysed in Wordsworth, the purpose of the *Prophetic Books* is precisely to analyse it. Their difficulty—that is, their poetic difficulty—is that the analysis is into terms of what in our modern critical slang is called "private" meanings. It is almost impossible to be poetically excited by being told that

Skofield vegetated by Reuben's gate  
In every Nation of the Earth.

Yet we know something of "Skofield"; we know he was the soldier who once intruded into Blake's garden, and thereby unknowingly immortalized himself for ever as an image of supernatural darkness. But when

In stern defiance came from Albion's bosom Hand, Hyle, Koban,  
Gwantok, Peachy, Brertun, Slaid, Hulton, Skofield, Kock, Kotope.  
Bowen, Albion's sons,

interest ceases if those names are not, by the story, brought into the story. They are not even allegory otherwise.

The word "Albion", however, is of another kind. In the Index to Messrs. Wallis & Sloss's edition, Albion is said to be the symbol "of the true relation of Time and Space with Eternity"; he is also "the Eternal Man", "the Giant Man"; he is fallen from the original unity—



"the perturbed Man turns away down the Valleys dark". The very title of the last of the *Prophetic Books* is *Jerusalem the Emanation of the Giant Albion*, and the poem opens with Albion's rejection of this Emanation, which he hides

Upon the Thames and Medway, rivers of Beulah, dissembling  
His jealousy before the throne divine, darkening, cold.

But the word "Albion" does not, to the general reader, first of all convey the idea of Universal Man; it means Britain, even perhaps England—"an ancient poetical name for England" say the concordances. And this Messrs. Wallis and Sloss allow, for they point it out, with the references to Albion's "White Cliffs" and even to the fogs:

Behold the foggy mornings of the Dead on Albion's cliffs.

Which may possibly have come from Caesar, where other poets have found the same idea of the Dead being related to Britain.

The *Prophetic Books* are strewn with a kind of mystical geography of Britain; some of their best passages are catalogues of Cities. In the fallen state of Albion these cities are also fallen, images of the Emanation Jerusalem:

London is a stone of her ruins. Oxford is the dust of her walls. It is the union of the strange mythical figures with the familiar mythical names which forms part of the fascination of the *Books*, as when Los

came down from Highgate thro' Hackney and Holloway towards  
London,

Till he came to old Stratford, and thence to Stepney and the Isle of  
Leutha's Dogs; thence through the narrows of the River's  
side

And saw every minute particular, the jewels of Albion, running  
down

The kennels of the streets and lanes as if they were abhorred.

This kind of union is a thing habitual to English verse; it is in the Walsinghame poem and it is not far (though



no names are mentioned) from the *Ancient Mariner*. Perhaps the nearest thing to Blake is the MS. of Christopher Smart which was edited in 1939 by Mr. W. Force Stead under the title *Rejoice in the Lamb*. That very remarkable sequence of verses had a great likeness to Blake's way of writing, both in its wildnesses and in its thrilling successes. The line

For the Antarctick Pole is not yet but shall answer in the Consum-  
mation

has the effect of one of Blake's dark and threatening prophecies; more to the point is

I bless the Lord JESUS upon Ramsgate Pier—the Lord forward  
the building of harbours;

or:

For I pray for Chichester to give the glory to God and to keep the  
Adversary at bay.

But it is in the *Prelude* that we have the sense of an "Albion" almost like Blake's. I think (though I cannot at the moment confirm) that the actual word was used in the 1805 text. Certainly the earlier part of the poem is concerned with the particular nature of "Albion"—the hills, the dales, the wide spaces, the storms are all part of it; so is Cambridge; so is London. It is there that Solitude appears, or rather the images which are declared to be the embodiments of "that great Power". It is also there that that other Power is felt which Wordsworth calls "the weight of ages", "weight and power", "power growing under weight". That sudden experience struck him as he was entering London, and it was in London that he became aware of the Beggar with the label, when again his mind turned round "as with the might of waters", the correspondence there of the other Solitaries seen in other parts of Albion.

The manner of Wordsworth and the manner of Blake were different enough. But if the *Prophetic Books* are concerned with some great and awful division by which (at least in *Jerusalem*) Albion is separated from his

tender and lovely Emanation, so the *Prelude* is concerned with the division between the forms of England and France. Blake had begun to deal with the French Revolution in his own style, though he abandoned it; and Wordsworth did deal with it in his. But it is no more by the mere nomenclature of geography in him than in Blake. His whole experience of exterior Nature in England—all the earlier books of the *Prelude*—has created a Form; his experience of the opening of the Revolution in France has created another. It is the division between those Forms which brought his own agony on him. He is separate; he is a man betrayed.

With open war  
Britain opposed the liberties of France.  
This threw me first out of the pale of love;  
Soured and corrupted, upwards to the source,  
My sentiments.

And (following on this, and on the change in the Revolutionary Government of France) Wordsworth continues to fall back into the frozen world of abstract thought divorced from its emanations of life and power. He actually uses the word when, speaking of "ancient Institutions", he refers bitterly to the "moral sentiments" which had become "the props Or *emanations* of those institutes". Where Blake speaks of Albion as having betrayed and persecuted his emanation Jerusalem, Wordsworth speaks of the ancient institutions of Albion—or of the Form that, in his verse, is Albion—as being disgraced by the emanation of moral sentiments instead of "varieties of human love". It might be worth considering, though here there is no space, how far Dorothy was to Wordsworth precisely an image of that true Emanation. In Blake the Emanation Jerusalem is feminine. She is redeemed by the repentance of Albion. Wordsworth was speaking only of the personal history of a child of Albion; but in that it is Dorothy who, like Jerusalem hovering among the "dark Satanic mills", preserves for him "a saving intercourse With my true self".

The Fall of Albion and his Redemption, then, may be

held to be presented, one way or another, in both poems. In both poems Albion is related to England: in *Jerusalem*, by the continual use of English geographical names; in the *Prelude*, by the creation of a Form from the vision of mountains, vales, moors, roads, and cities—named or unnamed. This sensation of Albion or England as enduring its sin and passion is a necessary theme of both poems; I do not say the chief theme—that is in one case a supernatural existence and in the other Wordsworth. But one theme it certainly is, and among the more passionate. Patriotism is not always a direct emotion, nor an obviously indirect. The fields and streets of England do not exist only by direct invocation of verse, nor by oblique allusions to cricket-fields or mining-villages.

It is impossible here to discuss the whole scheme of Blake's majestic tale of Redemption. Wordsworth never really told us his in full. But two points may be noted; one from each poet—from Wordsworth, the discovery of "the feeling intellect"; from Blake, the matter of Forgiveness. In the end perhaps these are not so distant, but they must wait for a poet as great as either before they can be reconsidered in a proper poetic mode.

The Wordsworthian dissolution of false bonds and resolution of perplexities occurs at the end of the *Prelude*. In that climax—a climax no less effective because the sound is subdued—the two themes of power and solitude are brought together, in the removed and interior state of the soul.

Here must thou be, O Man,  
Power to thyself; no Helper hast thou here . . .  
The prime and vital principle is there  
In the recesses of thy nature, far  
From any reach of outward fellowship,  
Else is not thine at all. But joy to him,  
O joy to him who here hath sown, hath laid  
Here the foundation of his future years  
. . . . . and he whose soul hath risen  
Up to the height of feeling intellect  
Shall want no humbler tenderness.

It is this which is meant by the Nature of which Wordsworth claimed to be a "prophet", for it is the mind of man ("a thousand times more beautiful than the earth On which he dwells") in which he is to instruct others. It is a state of unity, in which the intellect no longer "meddles" but knows and feels at once in rational proportion. The great work having been achieved within, power issues from it outward; the solitude of the spirit in its prime and vital principle issues into communion. It is this which is to aid in the deliverance not only of individuals but of nations, even those that have sunk to servitude, ignominy, and shame. Not only Albion, but all like Powers, are to rise in this experience against their old idolatry. But it can only be achieved by the intense and individual working.

I have said that Wordsworth did not perhaps altogether exhibit the manner of that working, and having said so I repent. So high a poet needs to be submitted to much more closely; we have to exercise towards him precisely "the feeling intellect". The words "power" and "glory" which he stamps on the *Prelude* everywhere have to become intense with life as we read him. But we may be helped in that by what we learn from other poets, since they,

even as prophets, each with each,  
Connected in a mighty scheme of truth,  
Have each his own peculiar faculty.

And it is here that Blake's theme of Forgiveness may be introduced.

It is, certainly, the climax of *Jerusalem*, and there are two chief places where the idea is set forward in Images; it is supported in other places and is repeated in the *Ghost of Abel*, the latest of Blake's works. The first of these two places is in Chapter III, in the dialogue between Jerusalem herself, the lovely and persecuted Emanation of Albion. She is in despair and darkness, except that she sees the "Divine Lamb" standing by her.\* The Lamb, who is also the "Human Imagination" and

\* It need not be stressed that Blake's use of such images is not, without consideration, to be identified with the Christian.

the "Divine Body", comforts her with hope of the resurrection of Albion from spiritual death, and shows her "in the visions of Elohim Jehovah" Joseph and Mary in Nazareth: what follows is wrought up from the phrase in St. Matthew—*voluit occulte dimittere eam*. The grand quarrel between the moral law and the sinning and loving spirit is here concentrated into the two semi-mystical figures. Joseph denounces Mary, who answers with an exquisite appeal not to self-justification but to "the forgiveness of sins". Joseph answers that appeal with tears, embraces, and a declaration of the nature of pardon. It is not, and cannot be, conditional; it must be absolute, and at the same time continuous; it is, in fact, the very nature of life. "The Gods, the Moral Virtues of the Heathen" forgive on condition that the offence shall not be repeated.

But Jehovah's Salvation

Is without Money and without Price, in the Continual Foregive-  
ness of Sins,  
In the Perpetual Mutal Sacrifice in Great Eternity.

The condition of non-repetition is a negation of pardon. It is not possible to man nor permitted by God. But pardon without such condition is a name for the direct operation of love. It involves "sacrifice"; "every sacrifice for others is a little death"; and the exchange of pardon between all men and women is the nature of the co-inherence which is eternal life. Life as we know it does not exist in spite of injury and forgiveness, but because of and through them, and that not in remote general principles but in actualities. "General Forms have their vitality in Particulars." It is the profound grasp of this, emotionally and intellectually at once, which Blake ascribes to the holy Imagination, and this is not far from "the feeling intellect" which Wordsworth saw as generative of all tenderness, of humble cares and gentlest sympathies. "All the tortures of repentance," runs the opening, "To the Christians" of the fourth chapter of *Jerusalem*, "are tortures of self-reproach on account of our leaving the Divine Harvest to the Enemy,

the struggles of entanglement with incoherent roots." It is at this point that he ceases "to brag of his triumph over his own incoherence"; he has extricated himself from it, and his own Emanation restores him to the lucid charity of the Divine Kingdom as Dorothy restored Wordsworth to the powers and solitudes and glories of his own "universe of life".

But even the perpetual Mutual Sacrifice is not the final nature: there is a further union. Albion is to live.

Jesus replied: "I am the Resurrection and the Life.  
I die and pass the limit of possibility as it appears  
To individual perception."

This was in the vision of Jerusalem. But in the fourth and last chapter of the book, after (it may be admitted) a good deal more incoherence, the wilder and more terrible raising of Albion takes place, and here in some odd and obscure way the poem means certainly to become "patriotic", that is, to be concerned with the *patria*. In Albion's cold trance of death,

England, a female shadow, as deadly damps  
Of the Mines of Cornwall and Derbyshire, lays upon his bosom  
heavy.

It is she who first wakes and cries out under the Divine  
Breath.

Her voice pierced Albion's clay cold ear; he moved upon the Rock.  
The Breath Divine went forth upon the moving hills. Albion  
mov'd

Upon the Rock: he open'd his eyelids in pain; in pain he mov'd  
His stony members: he saw England. Ah! shall the Dead live  
again? . . .

As the Sun and Moon lead forward the Visions of Heaven and  
Earth,

England, who is Britannia, entered Albion's bosom rejoicing.  
Then Jesus appeared, standing by Albion . . .

We must not take this Jesus as necessarily equivalent to  
the Jesus of history and the Church. But we may

realize that the intellectual passion of Blake saw here something that is of that Nature.

From this point the theme of the Forgiveness of Sins advances, a vision of Heaven and Earth. It is the great fundamental covenant not only between man and man but between man and God. It is the operation of "offering oneself for another", and in this sense it is clear that Blake is right, for there can be only two attitudes towards the sin of another towards oneself; one is to entertain a grudge, the other is not to entertain a grudge. To entertain it is precisely to prefer the selfhood to that other, that is precisely not to offer oneself; and in consequence (what is certainly as important), to prevent one properly apprehending how another is offered instead of oneself. It is as necessary to accept this sacrifice as to make it, and as necessary to live from it.

Thus do Men in eternity,  
One for another to put off by forgiveness every sin.

Anything else would be the destruction of the "feeling intellect" and its tendernesses; "the Human Body" becomes sterile. But in this Covenant, what both poets demanded and declared, is declared in its full "glory"; the universe

which moves with light and life informed.  
Actual, divine, and true. . . .  
By love subsists  
All lasting grandeur, by pervading love.

And so in Blake it is this in which exist the divine wonders

throughout all the Three Regions immense  
Of Childhood, Manhood, and Old Age: and the all-tremendous  
Non Ens  
Of Death was seen in regeneration terrific or complacent.

All the Forms in this covenant, and only so, have their identities maintained; "I heard the Name of their Emanations; they are namèd Jerusalem."



The *Prelude* and *Jerusalem* are poetry and not theology. But to read either—much more to read both—is to become aware in each poem according to its proper mode of a great Form with which in one sense or another England is identified; this Form errs or sins or is deceived; it loses, in itself or in its children, the Emanation or Vision which is its life and becomes lost in a cold world of moral chatter and careful grudge; yet it is, or is to be, restored. Its children are to be the Prophets of that Nature, and declare it. In both poets other nations are to live again through this—"their deliverance," says Wordsworth, "surely yet to come"; "O lovely Emanation of Albion," says Blake,

Awake, and overspread all Nations as in ancient Time.

No doubt both poets were thinking of much more than England, but no doubt (by their own words) both were thinking of England.

CHARLES WILLIAMS.

## RUSSIAN AND GERMAN NIHILISM\*

"We are all Nihilists."—DOSTOIEVSKY.

I WAS wounded in one of the early battles of 1914 and in hospital I read the works of Dostoevsky. I was profoundly impressed by this author, with whom I then made acquaintance for the first time. I had come in from a Russian battlefield, and nothing could have been more moving than his prophetic vision of a vast revolutionary cataclysm which would start in Russia but might perhaps destroy the whole world. But the most outstanding trait of this greatest of all modern psychologists was his nihilism. At first it existed only in the pathological, morbid subjects to be found among the "humiliated and insulted", but it was beginning to colour all our lives to a common hue. This nihilism was the logical continuation of the great struggle in the western lands for liberation from the power of tradition and the fetters of authority, from bondage and convention, and now, by a dialectical process, was becoming changed into its antithesis, into a total despotism with all the accessories of terror and oppression.

Dostoevsky depicted his revolutionaries as an inferno of doctrinaires and brooders, utopians, visionaries and cold-blooded cynical conspirators, but he also exposed the roots of this uncanny passion for destruction and revealed it as the satanic temptation towards self-glorification experienced by the man who seeks to be God. It is the temptation of "bread and happiness" indicated in the legends of the Grand Inquisitor and in the conception of a human crystal palace. "*Eris sicut deus*"—but endowed not merely with the power to distinguish between good and evil, but also to proclaim a new good and a new evil from a new Sinai.

This depressing revelation of coming disaster impelled

\* This exposition of Russian nihilism is not intended to draw any political deductions concerning the Soviet Union. We should rather regard nihilism as a continually active spiritual development which can now be reviewed from a historical standpoint. It is not within the scope of this article to define the new phase of political and spiritual growth of the Soviet Union as an actual state and a new form of society, or the extent to which it can overcome nihilism and become a permanent order.

the man who returned to the Russian front after his discharge from hospital to produce a literary sketch of the character of the Russian nation which was hastening towards an apocalyptic epoch, and this was published in a field newspaper. But he was forced to ask himself how far the future depicted by the great writer might be regarded as the specific destiny of the Russian people, and how far it might be deemed generally applicable to mankind. How far was it to be considered as a judgement on our whole civilization? Was there not a particular interest in this question for the German nation, which had been so profoundly shaken and stirred?

The uncanny resemblance between the Russian and German natures was bound to startle anyone who endeavoured to look beneath the surface. This affinity held good not so much for certain obvious superficial characteristics, but rather for the more profound spiritual processes. The dark satanism of lust for destruction and self-destruction was common to both. Both evinced the same "discomfort in culture" and both suffered from the chaotic note in their characters, from alternations between gloom and élan, and from a sudden transmutation of thoughts and feelings into their opposites. Did not this similarity of character seem to prophesy a like fate for the German people? Russians and Germans were the doctrinaires among the nations. Both had an absolute belief in Utopias, both were capable of linking fantasy and mysticism with radicalism and the tyranny of reason grown absolute. Both suffered from a lack of moderation which impelled them to pursue every notion and idea to its utmost consequences and continue to champion it even when reason had become nonsense and a blessing an evil. They suffered from the same two-sided character in which cruelty and sentimentality, profligacy and renunciation of the world, indulgence of the feelings and cold reasoning power dwelt side by side and alternated continually.

When a few years later the Russian destiny was fulfilled and Ivan Karamazov, Stavrogin and Shigalev became the new leaders of the Russian people, while only a little later chaos overwhelmed Germany, the

German who could not rest satisfied with the newly won superficial political liberty and realized that all German standards and values were about to perish felt himself inspired by one single motive—to preserve the German nation from a catastrophe similar to that which had overtaken Russia.

As yet there was no National Socialism. No one dreamt of the possibility of such a movement. But in the deeper cells of the mind many people were beginning to realize the link between various events, and to gain an inkling of the magnitude of the doom which threatened us. The thing which had become a brutal reality in Russia might at any moment become also Germany's doom, because it was the extreme but logical consequence of that memorable spiritual and moral process which western humanity hailed as liberation, enlightenment and purification from the mists and vapours of prejudices and conventions, as well as from what had been the pride of the leading spirits of this once Christian West for three or four centuries; the unmasking of ethics and ideologies. The historical stages of the struggle which was supposed to liberate humanity were indissolubly linked with this terrible fall into the abyss of a new barbarism. Secularism, rationalism and the Enlightenment, the great French Revolution, liberalism . . . all these flowed logically into a nihilism which assumed its first concrete political form in the Russian Revolution.

This process could not be reversed. It was irrevocable. It would have been absurd to attempt to create artificially a new Middle Age. But anyone who did not accept historical predestination and still believed in a free will and creative force which could overcome the temptations of the age was bound to ask himself whether it would be possible to vanquish nihilism or whether other nations beside the Russian were bound to pass through it. At that time we who had experienced the collapse of the Russian nation and the storms which had shaken our own became imbued with the idea of the "Conservative Revolution", to which the Austrian poet Hugo von Hofmannsthal has attached such profound and

yet such perplexing significance. "We may well term this process a slow and grandiose one," observed Hofmannsthal in his address on "The German Language", "when we consider that it really originates as an inner counter-movement against the spiritual revolution of the sixteenth century of which we generally speak in terms of its two aspects of Renaissance and Reformation. The process to which I refer is nothing else than a conservative revolution of a scope hitherto unknown in European history."

How then was it possible for such ideas and aspirations to give birth to a movement such as National Socialism, which indeed claimed to be fighting Russian nihilism and avowed that its sole mission was the destruction of the seeds of nihilism in the German nation, but which then became itself the political and spiritual expression of German nihilism? Is not such a tragic reversal of the desired end an uncanny confirmation of the pessimistic verdict which pronounced the advent of nihilism to be inevitable and doomed all nations to pass through it before they could set about the work of reconstruction and make a new beginning while learning to walk the paths of culture? They would have to pass through the successive stages of being, first, as in Dostoievsky, "Humiliated and Insulted", then vanquished and exhausted, stirred in their utmost depths by privation and misfortune—but then, perhaps, finally, they would become victors, the happy and contented ones! Did not this confirm the opinion of a radical German politician who maintained that in these times we could only will to move in one direction?

What is nihilism? Nietzsche has furnished the answer: "For a long time our entire European culture has been moving towards a catastrophe in the agony of a tension which increases from decade to decade. What I am about to tell you is the history of the next two centuries. I am describing what must come and what can no longer be avoided: the advent of nihilism." And what is this nihilism? "The devaluation of our highest values. We lack a goal; we question why, and there is no answer." This was Nietzsche's reply.

Nihilism was, therefore, not merely a German and Russian affair, but a common European destiny, a universal movement assuming different forms in every nation and country, a fate against which there was no talisman. The Russian and German forms of nihilism can only be rightly comprehended if we view them in the light of our general cultural crisis and regard them as parts of a universal phenomenon rather than as specific isolated stages in the development of two nations with unhappy dispositions. We must regard the general disintegration of standards and the birth of a new collective consciousness as the general premise of the nihilist phenomenon, and learn to distinguish them from the specific forms which nihilism has assumed in Russia and Germany. The reason why it has undergone such pronounced developments in these two countries is due not merely to their spiritual dispositions to which we have already referred, but also to a specific historical situation.

It would be misleading to overlook the universal temptation offered by nihilism. It would also lead to false conclusions if we determined to regard Bolshevism and National Socialism as merely political forms of a specific national nihilism. The difficulties of forming an opinion are confused by the facts that both movements certainly stress the general nihilistic tendencies of the nineteenth century to the utmost, that they make a clean sweep of all remnants of the old order, but that they do this with intent to vanquish nihilism by means of a new order forced on the nations concerned. This would seem to be the only way in which they can guarantee any sort of social order at all; it is an emergency measure for overcoming the chaos which must arise after the extinction of all conceptions of order.

Bolshevism and National Socialism gain control of destructive tendencies in order to acquire the motive force to overcome them. The absolute vacuum of the nihilistic abyss is spanned by the fabric of a new order which terrorization endows with some semblance of reality. But the political forms of nihilism also take control of the forces of a counter-movement against

nihilism and exploit them to enforce their new order, thus impairing the forces and motives of a genuine restoration. Consequently their victory over nihilism remains an illusion, the only reality being their gradual destruction of all values and forces of order. Moreover, the healing forces and the motives of a new order are compromised by misuse and consequently drawn into the vortex of destruction and self-disintegration. It is only thus that nihilism attains its utmost limits, from which no return is possible.

## II

Political nihilism is the logical climax of middle-class radicalism (I eschew the word "liberalism" because its meaning in this country differs somewhat from that attached to it in the greater part of the European continent). Its roots will undoubtedly be found in the outstanding champions of spiritual, moral and political emancipation of the eighteenth century. Up to the very moment when he seized power, Lenin was wont to recommend a study of the works of the French Encyclopedists.

It is not merely in the religious sphere that we must look upon middle-class radicalism as a first step to consistent nihilism. The responsibility for the growth of nihilism falls on middle-class radicalism because of its planned deliberate unmasking of all conscious illusions, a process which it terms spiritual and political emancipation and by means of which it destroys traditions and ethical and spiritual standards—an exposure which is carried to the extent of complete ideological perplexity. Once this process of exposure has begun it is impossible to arrest it at any given point with a command of "Thus far and no farther". With inherent logic it obeys the law of progressive gradation until it reaches the absolute zero point where it has to undergo transmutation into its opposite. Thus complete emancipation becomes complete tyranny.



If we bear these facts in mind we must renounce many previous conceptions regarding the political forms assumed by nihilism at the end of this process. The liberal middle-classes cannot and will not eliminate from their private and political lives many gains of middle-class radicalism. Among these we may include the French Revolution, with its dogmas of Liberty and Equality and the "Tyranny of Reason" (Robespierre). The emancipation of the spirit, liberation from prejudices—first from class prejudices and then from prejudices in general—abolition of traditional moral laws and conceptions of order, "emancipation of the flesh" following on emancipation of the spirit, until finally we reach emancipation *from* the spirit, the fight against family shackles leading to the loosing of all ties, liberation from political authority leading to liberation from any kind of authority, the liberalization of religion into a non-committal humanitarianism leading to the abolition of any kind of religion, the overthrow of superstition leading to the elimination of any link with the transcendental which comes to be considered as a remnant of childish myths—all these things are inextricably interwoven.

The confirmation of these facts can hardly be regarded as an indictment, but it would be equally futile to attempt to deny the connection which has been demonstrated. We cannot reverse this development and return to the state of affairs existing before it began. We must not overlook the fact that the dialectic temptation which continually radicalizes this process is rooted in the essence of humanity and indeed in its noblest core—in the urge towards truth and reality.

What is reality? The answers supplied to this question by middle-class radicalism are the steps of the ladder leading to political nihilism. Economics, says Karl Marx; the sexual instinct, says the middle-class radical, Sigmund Freud; the will to power, says Nietzsche. But it was the Economic Man, that ominous conception which regards the human being as merely a function of economics, who was the immediate creation of liberal middle-class ideas.

## III

When the Russian anarchist Bakunin exalted the passion for destruction as a creative passion, he only voiced an opinion championed by all leading personalities of the nineteenth century—middle-class liberals and revolutionaries alike—whose actions were based on emancipatory motives. Destruction of traditions and ties as a premise for the attainment of a better and freer life was the common denominator of the whole of the last century. Despite its revolutionary language, the earlier Russian nihilism is in essence nothing more than a sharper formulation of universal tendencies.

Tyranny in the name of justice, for the sake of a better world, was the maxim of Belinsky, who may be termed the first Russian nihilist. It was not so original as it seemed, because it was nothing more than the transplantation of French Jacobinism to Russian soil. Cruelty, bloodshed and executions motivated by sympathy for humanity strike a more pronouncedly Russian note. Happiness must be forced upon humanity, if need be by terror and compulsion—that was the red thread interwoven through all revolutionary ideas. Chernishevsky and Pisarev, the leaders of the old Russian nihilist movement, started from the premises of middle-class radicalism. They strove for emancipation from prejudices and from the fetters of family life, they fought for intellectual freedom, against existing rights and traditional morals and customs. They rejected the conception of the State and acknowledged themselves materialists. Only after their first onslaughts on culture does a new element begin to emerge. It was one which proved itself effective in every revolution, including the French Revolution where it was made manifest in Rousseau, but it assumed radical tendencies of a new kind in Russian nihilism.

This element is a feeling of satiety towards culture, an "uneasiness", as Freud would say, an unwillingness to continue to carry the heavy burden of humanity and its spiritual and ethical obligations. Here we find the

destruction of historical traditions linked with glorification of an unhistorical epoch or of a superhistorical one, with the end of all times.

And here emerges that remarkable contradiction which characterizes every later form of nihilism—the mysticism of a new millennium which shall be a thing of our time and completely materialistic, but which in its emotional impulses is based on ancient millennial aspirations, a deep longing to throw off our entire culture as a heavy burden, yet combined with a primitive pride in the progress made in a life whose external aspects become increasingly technical. Apocalyptic ideas combined with the glorification of natural science and national economy, instead of religion and spiritual ideas. War on spiritual ideas, war on the very conception of soul or spirit, and war against religion became almost the main tenet of this first stage of the nihilist revolution. For Bakunin the idea of God implied a rejection of reason, justice and liberty. For him the idea of God was an excuse for the power which a man might seek to exercise over his fellows. God was the cause of the enslavement of one part of mankind by the other. A further natural consequence of this was Bakunin's war against human personality and his doctrine that belief in an immortal soul rendered a man anti-social.

With its denial of freedom of the spirit, with its war on the spirit and with what Dostoievsky terms the betrayal of liberty in the name of bread and happiness, Russian nihilism passed beyond the frontiers of middle-class radicalism, which had always carried out its exposures in the name of liberation of the spirit from bondage, and assumed a character of its own.

#### IV

In Germany nihilism did not assume such a radical preliminary form as the Russian variety. Its connection with radical, middle-class and socialistic ideas is likewise not clear enough to prevent false notions concerning its origin. The material of its political formu-

lation is also confused with its own peculiar revolutionary methods. But there should be no deception concerning the real forces of the German Revolution, which are identical with those of the Russian and Italian revolutions.

The transition in Germany from middle-class radicalism—which here was more radical and less middle-class than the radicalism of other European countries—to nihilism took place under the influence of men such as Feuerbach, materialists such as Büchner and Moleschott, and we must naturally add Karl Marx. Nor can the name of Hegel be omitted. German nihilism began by making reason absolute and, in its present stage, ends by attaching an equally absolute value to irrationalism, to the urge to life, to power and to force. The revolutionary power of dialectic entered German life with Hegel positing for each concept its absolute negation.

Fichte

Here we must seek the roots of that paradox which characterizes manifestations of nihilism so clearly. Hegel himself shows it in two diametrically opposed aspects of his philosophy—the conservative and the revolutionary. On the one hand there is Hegel, the philosophic advocate of the Prussian State as the realization of absolute spirit, on the other hand Hegel, the philosopher of the dialectical process which leads to Marxism.

With Nietzsche, motives have become entirely conscious. Those motives have not yet reached the point of the masses' urge to destruction; his nihilism is rather exalted to an aristocratic principle. It is the principle of choice for the truly free and independent spirits who have, so to speak, broken out of the eggshell in which the dreary past enclosed them and now stand on such a lofty height that they can use this freedom without risk.

Thus it may be seen that the forces of revolution were assembled also in Germany nearly two generations before the seizure of power by the National Socialists. These forces included the social motives for a social revolution, the doctrine of a coercive dictatorship exercising terroristic methods in order to enable a revolutionary minority to impose a new social order on the majority, the renunciation of the standards and principles of

democracy, and a complete liberation from all tradition and all existing values by means of the doctrine of the will to power, which was to constitute life's ultimate reality. But yet another general disintegration was needed before these forces could combine to form National Socialism and gain power to abolish the existing order. Germany was waiting for the advent of a phenomenon, the importance of which has not yet received the attention it warrants. This phenomenon might be termed popular cynicism.

## V

Doubt and criticism are the indispensable means for all searching and striving after truth. The process of the liberation of mankind during the last three centuries has become great and memorable by virtue of the earnestness of the efforts and the magnitude of the subject which occupied the critical faculties of the human spirit. But when such critical beginnings sank to the level of everyday use by the middle classes and the schedule of thought of trivial sceptics, there arose a universal questioning of the elements of human order—a questioning totally unrelated to philosophic doubt and earnest criticism. The fruit of this trivial scepticism was a relativism which engendered in wide circles a readiness to tolerate and adapt oneself to anything. This led to the capitulation of the middle class before every revolutionary demand, and to venality among the intellectual classes. It is this aspect which particularly characterizes the emergence of political nihilism in Germany.

The ideological perplexity caused by the unmasking of all standards and ideologies was bound, in middle-class circles, to veer round towards that type of cynicism which adapts itself to the situation in the only way open to it, namely, by attaching no vital importance to any but material things. If this state of affairs has been promoted by special circumstances in Germany and has

become plain to all eyes, we need have no illusions about the fact that only external circumstances have preserved other nations from similar manifestations. If there is an inclination in many quarters to identify the present crisis with the end of the middle-class epoch of Western culture, this supposition is correct at least in so far as the disintegration of the ethical and spiritual basis of middle-class life has created the premise for a swift victory of activist nihilism.

## VI

It was at the end of the previous century that the revolutionary tendencies of nihilism assumed that hitherto unknown form of activity which characterizes the essence of all shades of modern nihilism. Nihilism began to lose confidence in the idea of an automatic process of self-disintegration and was unwilling to wait for the complete devaluation of the elements of the existing order by economic and social forces. Nihilists therefore made efforts to shorten and direct the process by planned revolutionary action and by the employment of special methods of political warfare in order to obtain possession of the decisive pre-requisites and key positions of power. The will to power, hitherto an aristocratic and philosophic concept, must now be made a political weapon. The nihilists were no longer concerned with the clarification of the views and opinions of the masses, but concentrated their energies on an elementary fight for power.

This change of tactics is plainly manifested in Plekhanov, the founder of Russian Marxism. The idea of a revolutionary acquisition of power is the focal point of all his thoughts. The theory of organized terrorism was established and the first practical efforts in that direction were made.

Here we may see a cult of will. The new order is no longer to be achieved gradually by understanding and the enlightenment of reason. All hopes of middle-class enlightenment are rejected with scorn. Everything



must be subordinated to the *effect* to be achieved—and, in particular, the effect on the masses and on their collective subconsciousness. This gives rise to the technique of a propaganda which can no longer be described as the art of convincing or persuading or even of sophistical misleading. Modern propaganda is the technique of stirring and guiding the masses by means of appeals to particular emotional impulses, by means of suggestion, mental intoxication and diversion, and so a new form of political warfare comes into existence. It is not confined to Germany and Russia, for the leading ideas of this new technique were formulated rather in France and Italy. *It is a universal phenomenon, which is beginning to remould the entire political life of the European continent.*

What distinguishes Lenin and, after him, Mussolini and Hitler, from the fore-runners of revolutionary nihilism is their fundamental conversion to the idea that revolutions are made by actions rather than by outlooks, views and doctrines. The consciousness is changed by deeds and actions, not by convictions and study. A *Weltanschauung*—a philosophy of life—is certainly a means to action in that it furnishes the necessary motives, but the action itself is the decisive factor.

So we see the rise of dynamism. It is rooted in the turn given to Marxism by Lenin. It is by no means a National Socialist or Fascist discovery. Lenin, Sorel, Pareto—these three may be said to have embraced both theoretically and practically that form of revolutionariness which originates from revolutionary socialism but sees the real essence of life as action and advocates movement for its own sake.

Another element of modern nihilism, and one as common to all forms of it as is dynamism, is the principle of rule by an organized minority over the masses which have been brought and kept under its sway by means of the special technique described above. The third premise for the organization of a revolution is the formation and disciplining of a special élite. To them are assigned the decisive roles in revolutionary action. It is no longer the masses, the “men of the streets” man-



ning the barricades, who furnish the revolutionary troops. The revolution itself is no longer an improvised stimulus to deeds of heroism, but a rationally planned process which must be carefully worked out to the last detail like a stratagem of war by a revolutionary general staff. The élite corps of leaders and the cadre organization of special revolutionary troops are the action factors. In the theoretical formulation, the historical phases are simplified to a system of rotation for the élite and the periodic replacement of elder members of the élite who have lost their will to power by newcomers thrusting themselves into the foreground under the urge of a brutal will to power.

Another indispensable requisite for the organization of revolutions is the *political myth*. Doctrines and rational teachings are replaced by a suggestive vision working on the imagination and emotions. The political myth originated in Marxist socialism. The other forms of political nihilism followed the example and evolved their own myths. They need these myths as nuclei of their doctrines. The myths operate by means of demonstrating the simplest contrast between an absolute good and evil. They operate by means of personifications, and so we have the antitheses of bourgeois and proletarian, Jew and Aryan. In the same way there arises the idea of class war, and the saviour proletariat, and that of the Jewish world domination and the saviour people, the Aryans. Thus proletarians and Aryans alike appear grotesquely in the venerable role of a "new Israel". "New tables of the law" are proclaimed from a "new Sinai", for the artificial myth employs the ancient nomenclature of religious life in order to link up with the forces of the subconscious.

Simple, elementary passions are aroused—hatred and revenge, enthusiasm and fanaticism—which keep the masses in a state of suggestibility, and these feelings, continually renewed, mask the element of compulsion in the new schooling of the masses into which organized revolution has merged. This originates from Marxism and has been adopted by the non-Marxist forms of nihilism. In the chaos of the general break-up

of order and society only training and compulsion can create a basis of existence for mankind. But only a dictatorship can also create the new man.

Dictatorship is a concentration of all energies for the sole purpose of remoulding man and his social order. An order which touches only externals cannot produce the miracle of the transformation of mankind which the older Utopian socialism awaited. Only under severe pressure and by means of specially adapted compulsive measures—by a process of breaking-in, to put it bluntly—can man undergo the radical change which the future requires of him.

This causes revolutionary movements to adopt a new attitude towards the State. The older nihilism was as hostile to the State conception as middle-class liberalism was, but the new nihilism exploits the State as the most powerful factor for the suppression of its opponents and the evolution of a new type of man. The State thus becomes an instrument of the revolutionary power-élite.

But the State loses its previous character. It becomes a machine. A vast mechanism comes into existence, along with a new privileged class. A classless society, a community of the people, remain fictions; the new reality is a governing stratum superimposed on the subjected masses. The necessity to keep a strict watch on all spheres of public and private life (in so far as any private life remains) leads to bureaucratization on a gigantic scale.

## VII

If we see nihilism for what it really is, we need no longer be surprised at the similarity in political forms and methods in the various countries in which it forms the basis for a new order. The releasing impetus giving rise to activist nihilism varies from country to country, but generally its metamorphosis into political form follows the same laws everywhere and leads to almost identical results. It is only in the early stages that there is any distinction between the nationalist aspect of National

Socialism and the communist aspect in Soviet Russia. The futility of classifying National Socialism as a new Prussianism is shown by the similarity in the new type of man which has developed in Russia, Germany and Italy: the militarized man.

Nihilism, in becoming the predominant vital emotion of a nation or society, develops a new type of man who not only renounces his claim to individuality or personality but who also represents the defeat of the liberating man endowed with knowledge, who is only a man of thought and spiritual revelation. The modern revolutionary man is a soldier; a man of action who performs his allotted task. He is a disciplined man. The political and spiritual types of mankind are vanquished along with the Economic Man. It is not barter and compromise that constitute the regulating principle of the co-ordination of many individual decisions to a single will, and so we have the vision of a new freedom which is not based on choice and individual decision but is only the voluntary assent of subordinated yes-man. The limits of what is necessary are fixed by the collectivity. There is only freedom by means of the collectivity. But freedom is, above all, creative energy; it connotes the possibility of being allowed to perform a task of work. Freedom is service.

Such a transformation of human instincts and subjugation of individual desires to the service of a common task is only possible under the impulse of a permanent enthusiasm. The leaders must hold out objectives which arouse enthusiasm, such as the gigantic Five Year Plan of the Soviet Union, the revival of the Roman Empire, domination of the world by the Aryans as represented by National Socialism.

It is the remoulding of the world which constitutes, more or less, the basic motive of this enthusiasm. But while enthusiasm is being organized, a cult of hatred and revenge must also be nurtured. A constant struggle against satiety, satisfaction and need for rest becomes necessary. Hatred and revenge are the most powerful means of scaring men out of their visions of comfort and the lower middle-class emotion of "domestic happiness".

Consequently evil is deliberately utilized as a means of progress, or, as a Russian has formulated it: "The evil is the way to the good." The fanaticism, cruelty and violence characteristic of all forms of political nihilism are not so much a means to combat the saboteur, the capitalist or the camouflaged bourgeois as a corrective to the party man's own weaknesses and his own indulgence in happiness. Nations which have fallen victims to nihilism undergo a psychical metamorphosis, the scope of the effect of which no one can judge. Dreamers and visionaries become brutal men of action. Whole nations endeavour to discard their previous characters like old outworn clothing. Under nihilism the Russian people abandoned their passivity, their capacity to wallow in sufferings, and became a nation ready for brutal action and restless activity, just as a century ago the "nation of poets and thinkers" was transformed into a nation of organizers and militarists.

The cult of action is the decisive factor behind the mythical visions and doctrinaire formulae which vary from country to country. Bolshevism develops its doctrine of "auto-motion", Fascism evolves the more primitive conceptions of "creative unrest" and National Socialism preaches a permanent state of flux and a creative dominant race. It is the paradox of this crisis that the movements representing the forces of destruction which annihilate the orders that have evolved in the course of history all feel themselves to be creative forces and see human creativity in the very fact of movement and transformation.

Is nihilism the instrument chosen to release real creative forces? As yet it is too early to answer such a question. Hitherto it has been the false creative force of hysteria which produced an illusion of real creativity by means of grandiose efforts of a material nature. But the impulses towards a universal transformation are gigantic. Can the world of democratic values make a stand against them?

Nihilism can no longer return to these values. Where total monism prevails, a pluralistic order is impossible. There can be no democratic freedom in a sphere in

which the individual and his private domain have been abolished. With him also disappear science and art as we have hitherto known them, because they demand as a basis the creative freedom of the individual personality. Science becomes a means of domination and a pre-requisite of power. It enjoys as little freedom as does art. Science ceases to take for its foundations a paltry nominalism, but it is no longer a free creed. It is a regulated creed . . . a creed determined by the State, by the Party, by the Dictator. This applies equally to Bolshevik science and the "true-to-type" science of National Socialism. Thought can no longer be isolated from will. Science has only a purport as long as it serves the revolutionary action.

Nihilism becomes an absolute antithesis of that which the human urge to freedom has set as its goal. It creates a new absolutism, in contrast with which the absolute monarchies of historical times must appear as ineffective preliminary efforts. While renouncing the rights of moral personality and establishing a compulsory religion, this new total absolutism abolishes the sphere of private life within which the individual under the old forms of absolutism enjoyed his own rights of personal liberty. The totalitarian absolute State comes into existence, with a State economy based on the subjugation of all citizens and the creation of an official caste. The individual counts only as a means to the end, while even the members of the ruling class have no more freedom than any other citizen. After three centuries of historical development we are back again at the starting point from which the progress of spiritual and political liberation began. The gains from this circular tour would appear to be more effective means of oppression, a more effective organization of total dependency and the abolition of the last sphere of private decision and liberty.

## VIII

It may be argued that the similarity between the political forms of Russian and German nihilism is only a

superficial one and that the tendencies of their development are diametrically opposite. Russian nihilism, we are told, has been transformed by Bolshevism into a new order which is not yet perfected, which carries all the wounds and scars of a transition period, but which nevertheless displays all the elements of the development of a new cultural epoch. Bolshevism may be conceived as a revolution in the direction of human progress. National Socialism, on the other hand, might be looked on as merely the organization of power and the maintenance of power to ensure the domination of a clique. In this respect it would be correct to say that National Socialism is radically the last and positively the most extreme formulation of nihilism, in its capacity of an exposé of the ideologies and a destroyer of the traditions of the Western countries. Nihilism, too, in this extreme National-Socialist formulation, also exposes the ideology which constituted the original motive of revolutionary Marxism, namely, the establishment of a just social order.

The starting point of the revolutionary activity comprised in National Socialism is the idea that there are no longer any values and that anything which assumes the semblance of a value must be opposed to healthy vital instincts and under the cloak of humanity only serves to further a "government by the inferior". Certainly Bolshevism does not pronounce such a judgement, and did not embark upon its revolution from any such motive, but for all practical purposes it acts in exactly the same way. There is an identity of reality which makes both forms of political nihilism into phenomena of a similar nature, even though one of them still clings firmly to an ideological superstructure which it no longer appears to take seriously. It is the subjection of all persons within the new all-embracing absolutism of a vast order, in which there are no spheres of private, spiritual or moral liberty.

Sigmund Freud, who may well be termed the last middle-class "enlightener", was amazed at the alliance between barbarism and progress in Bolshevism, and found something like consolation in the fact that the



modern barbarism of National Socialism imposed itself without the aid of any such alliance with progress. He overlooked the fact that the middle-class liberal conception of progress was overthrown at the moment when a beginning was made with the establishment of a final order which should be the last in human history. Likewise he failed to see that conceptions of progress and enlightenment are devoid of meaning when all values are exposed and men are only bound by elements of an order imposed on them by terrorism.

The distinction between the two forms of barbarism, whether allied or not allied with progress, shows, however, that middle-class radicalism is conscious of its inner kinship with Bolshevism as a last consequence of its own efforts, but feels itself completely hostile to National Socialism, which is in opposition to everything which it previously considered as vitally important. Middle-class radicalism imputes to Bolshevism the tendencies which governed its own nature, but which Bolshevism has overcome. But in reality it is Bolshevism which makes a transition from radicalism, the pioneer of human progress, to that which we may term organized barbarism. It is Bolshevism which already stands for the suppression of enlightenment and all its motives for improving, instructing and humanizing mankind. Bolshevism conquers scepticism, which it deems a middle-class affair; it removes relativism; it is the will to a conscious single-mindedness, to a positive creed and to a dogma, just as much as National Socialism is.

Nihilism is overthrown because individuals are forced to act collectively for practical purposes and to think and behave as if they were influenced by definite standards and values. In this simple fashion Bolshevism and National Socialism wind up the revolution.

The trick of this victory over nihilism lies in an inversion. It is useless to attempt to change a man's convictions in order to induce him to act in the desired way; instead, he must be forced to act in a definite way, and then the ideological superstructure of stable standards and views will come into existence automatically. "Force a man to act as if from conviction, and he will become



convinced." This is the maxim of the new order, which resolves the element of nihilism alike in Bolshevism and in National Socialism.

It is a tension of will rather than an expansion of knowledge which comes into the foreground. The new anti-democratic, anti-humane type of man is born; he is a man to whom freedom—in the sense formerly applied to it—means nothing, a man who only feels himself free in collectivity as the component part of a mass, a man who finds safety as part of a collectivity, in which he feels himself to be liberated from the terrors of existence. This liberation is his liberty. He feels himself freed from personal responsibility. The new morality gives him freedom of pleasure within the limits of its innocuousness for the collectivity. Emancipation from every kind of transcendental value and the removal of every demand of a higher destiny are not regarded as an impoverishment of human life, but as the final liberation from conceptions of a previous dark age. The term "priest without soutane", which originated in the world of middle-class radicalism, is now applied to everyone who professes himself a non-materialist and assigns an independent role to the spirit.

Marx taught that religion was an obstacle to the liberation of the proletariat. Belief in God was not only a weakness but also a means to oppression. The comrades of the Bolshevist and National Socialist Parties are under an obligation to fight for atheism. The fight against religion as an instrument of class oppression developed into a fight against the spirit as a force beyond or outside material processes. If the fight against the spirit may be counted a criterion of barbarism, then the overthrow of nihilism in the political form of the new absolutism is also barbarism. In Bolshevism, however, there is no alliance between progress and this form of barbarism, because the conception of progress ceases at the point where there is no longer any recognition of the spirit. Thus the "process of the liberation of humanity" ends in the greatest paradox of human history—in a denial of itself.

It is difficult to answer the question whether there is

any way out of this last and most extreme stage of European revolutionism. For National Socialism there is certainly no return. The case of Bolshevism might be different. While the counter-revolutionary factor in National Socialism has only served to maintain its power, Bolshevism certainly contains motives for a renewal of the Western spirit in a Russian milieu which cannot be overlooked. But those motives could only become decisive factors for the future in the event of a restoration of the historical continuity broken by the revolutionary process.

There are no further phases of radicalization. It is therefore futile to endeavour to overcome the extremest forms of the European revolution by means of a new "European Revolution". There can only be a victory over nihilism in the sense of a termination of the great revolutionary movement and all its rationalistic Utopias and the reunion of its component parts with Western tradition.

But the anticipation of such a reversal is a difficult task. Consequently we are faced with the possibility of a yet deeper downfall than that represented by the present forms of Bolshevism and National Socialism. What will happen if one day the artificially engendered enthusiasm for the compulsory order should become extinguished? Shall we see the inevitable rise of a state of permanent anarchy, in which temporary dictatorships will establish themselves in certain localities for brief periods, only to be swept away by even more chaotic conditions of anarchy? With prophetic vision Jacob Burckhardt has foretold in his *Weltpolitische Betrachtungen* just such a doom descending upon all nations assailed by the great destructive historical crisis.

HERMANN RAUSCHNING.

## PERSON AND SOCIETY

**W**HEN heavy blows are shattering what was good and beautiful in our personal life, it demands courage to look beyond the still smoking ruins to wider horizons ; it demands faith to accept personal disaster as part of the unknown plans of Providence ; to recognize that God has a right to use our personal history for the history of that human race which He redeemed. It demands still more courage and faith to be able to stand back from personal sufferings and calmly to study God's purpose with mankind, so as to discern the way in which we may make, if necessary, even our personal disasters fall in with these plans of God for the whole of mankind. The possibility of this heroism was given us at Baptism. Guided by the Spirit of Christ, we are allowed and enabled to study the science of the martyrs : to make history by rising above the framework of the immediate present. Let us do both these things : stand back from our personal sufferings for the moment and study the meaning of the cataclysm which shatters the walls of our small existence, so that, even in the darkness of death, we may walk as children of light.

It has often been said that the deepest meaning of the present crisis of mankind is the defence of the human person. There is much truth in this if one looks at the ugly ferocity with which Nazism, Fascism and Communism trample on the fragile beauty of the human person. Yet it is perhaps simplifying too much and leading to confusion. It is mainly, if not exclusively, because we have lost the right notion of human society that the human person is misunderstood, or even villified. It is not so much the individual human person as the relation of the human person to human society, in other words, the social human person which is the debated point. Prompted by a magnificent series of Papal Encyclicals, from Leo XIII till the reigning Pontiff, we begin to realize that the absolutized individual of the last three centuries is as disastrous for universal peace and justice as the absolutized State. We begin to see that both these conceptions must needs lead to a divorce

of person and society. We begin to realize that person and society must be integrated into one whole; that person and society are one. The new world-order to be born from the present cataclysm is the world-order of love, based not only on the first commandment, the love of God, but equally on the second, similar to and one with the first, the love of our fellow-man. Peace and justice will reign only in an order based on the quintessence of Christ's Revelation, to love God in and with our fellow-man. There we shall rise to a wider and deeper conception of the human person; there we shall discover the integral human person.

It may be useful to start by forming a clear picture of what we are discussing—the *fact of human solidarity*. This is best done by putting our consciousness with all its alertness and sensitiveness in touch with the cold and rough surface of a concrete fact. First there is the fact of our *material interdependence*. It is commonplace to say that we need each other for our material needs. Yet, which of us has ever given a thought to the fact that the food we take, the clothes we wear, the tools we use are so many vital links with our fellow-man? How many of us could make a nail, or weave an inch of cloth? How many of us would know how and where to find the iron, or how to rear the sheep, to treat the wool, or to produce a loaf from the seed sown in the dumb soil? Every moment of our daily round we are swaddled like helpless infants in the labour, the skill, the sufferings of others. Those who have nothing but money are the most helpless, the least "man". Secondly, there is the obvious fact of our *biological interdependence*. Our very being is but a wave in the centuries-old stream of continuous generation. We do not know, and never shall know, how far back we can trace the many individual features of body and soul which are the sole fruit of heredity. Our flesh is the fruit of other flesh, our blood began to flow in other blood. Just as there is but one human nature in which we all share, so there seems to be but one life of which the pattern takes shape in the constant moving of the warp and woof of our individual existences. Lastly our *intellectual and spiritual interdependence*—we

begin to lead a truly personal life only when our mind is opened to the world around us. It is immediately nourished with the thoughts, words, ways and outlook of others, just as our body is fed on our mother's milk and our father's bread. If we have not got to start as primitives, inventing tools and learning a practical way of dealing with the rudiments of life, we owe it to that progress of the universal man into which we are inserted at a given stage. In thought, study, craft, art and religion, everywhere this insertion of ourselves into the human process is the first stage and condition of any contribution we may dream of making one day ourselves to life. When we begin to live (and for most people for the rest of their life), almost the whole contents of our inner life is sheer tradition, either in its lowest form of convention and custom, or in its highest form of communal worship.

All this shows, in however superficial a way, that, as a concrete fact our personal life is an integral part of a long, sustained organic process. From this concrete fact it seems to follow that a notion of human personality which makes abstraction of this organic process cannot be complete, and therefore not true.

There is a general abhorrence (not altogether justified, nor sound) of what is called abstract treatment. On the other hand, any completely concrete case is so very subject to particular influences that it blurs the real issues which are not on the surface of things, and so it obscures the real point. Therefore it is perhaps best to discuss the problem in general against a concrete background.

And so we shall put the problem in the sphere of human experience, and study the relation of person and society in the light of moral law. Before we start, however, it is necessary, by way of *status questionis*, to say something about the general outlook on the problem today.

## II

Today we witness a crude disruption of human society. The germs of this disruption were hidden in an outlook

on life which discarded the whole to adore the parts. It is the outlook of individualism, which came to the fore in the later Middle Ages and has been on the increase ever since. Historically it might be defined as *the detachment of man's religious outlook from its necessary cultural and social background*. If it seems strange to define a historical process by religious development, it may be answered that ultimately history is determined, not by economic conditions, however influential, nor by politics, however swaying, but by the relation of the average man with God and his fellow-man. This is why religious development would seem to be the surest criterion of history, because the deepest and the most decisive. Other criteria may be very important, but I do not believe that the liberal school of history is right in making them the really decisive factor. Incidentally this criterion shows up the fatal mistake of trying to interpret history without a solid theological and philosophical grounding.

Even now, in spite of the crisis, individualism is still defended by many under the disguise of the inalienable rights of human personality. The human person is without any doubt inviolable, because God is his personal end. But does this mean that God is something merely subjective, and that therefore each individual's subjective ideas or whims or emotions are his only law? Does it mean that there is no objective purpose, no objective tradition, no law and no authority? Does this inviolability justify the rejection of objective principles for the sake of arbitrariness and lawlessness? If that is so, there is no reason on earth why we should blame Stalin, Hitler or Mussolini. In holding, as it does in theory and in practice, that there are no objective norms for the human person, individualism is the worst enemy of the human person. It substitutes arbitrary and imaginary schemes for the objective schemes of God; it is the most subtle and poisonous attack on the sovereignty of God; it frustrates the inalienable, constructive freedom of the person by the arbitrariness—emotional, imaginative, or wilful—of individual caprice. We are told that the human person is absolute. And it is precisely because individualism has, for five or six centuries,



poisoned the human mind with the illusory sensation of being absolute that, first, religious life was severed from its ecclesiastical, sacramental and social background, and afterwards, unchecked self-interest led to the horrid individualistic society whose bitter fruit we are tasting now.

### III

Before proceeding further we must discard a confusion which, especially today, paralyses all discussion of the social problem, I mean the confusion of person and individual.

Human nature is nothing but a purpose, one of those purposes which constitute the dynamism of creation. It belongs to the realm of the spirit and therefore has an almost indefinite possibility of expanding. It consecrates man as priest of the whole of the material universe. Through this priesthood the whole universe is to be sanctified and made an immense symphony of praise. It is through man that the Hymn of the Three Children becomes a reality: Blessed art thou in the firmament of heaven . . . All ye works of the Lord, bless the Lord: praise and exalt him above all for ever (Dan. iii, 56-7). When man studies the ways of the stars, the order and harmony of their orbits, and sees in them the marvels of God's Intellect, he sanctifies them. When man sets mountains, hills and valleys apart because he recognizes in their beauty the reflection of Divine Beauty, he sanctifies them. When he uses plants and animals and other "works of the Lord" for his personal sustenance he integrates them into his own Godward purpose, he sanctifies them. When he uses stone and wood and fire for the dwelling-place of the human family, he sanctifies them. When he builds temples and adorns them with the manifold marvels of art, when he may rightly sing, "Blessed art thou in the holy temple of thy glory" (Dan. iii, 53), he consecrates the universe in his priestly function. All this, and the many things implied in it, exceeds the scope of the isolated individual. One person cannot at



the same time be father and mother, child and adult, peasant and scholar, married and virgin, clerical and lay, Hebrew and Greek. Yet all these things are beautiful and belong to the scope of human nature. Although, then, each human person is completely human, he cannot alone adequately work out the vastness of human nature. And this exceeds the isolated person for no other reason than that the material element in man necessarily restricts him and creates limits of time, space and quantity. And this restriction bears on the whole range of human faculties. It bears on reason, because reason starts from and in sense-perception. Reason can and does transcend matter, but it does so, if I may use a popular simile, like a balloon which floats high up in the air, in its own atmosphere, but remains tied to the ground by cords which limit its freedom of movement. And if reason is limited, the will which depends on what and how reason proposes is limited, too, not to mention the influence of imagination and passion. Dante boldly said that the understanding of the universe was seated in the intellect of man, and that, to be adequate, this intellect must be the intellect of the "*universitas humana*", the whole human race, of all continents and all centuries.\*

If, then, human nature is only incarnated, made concrete, in individual human persons, and if these individual human persons cannot, in isolation, adequately work out the full scope of the human purpose because of the limitations of matter, it follows that only a multitude of human persons can make up for this individual inadequacy. And since the human purpose is single and continuous, this multitude must be, not an accumulation of isolated individuals (which would turn the inadequacy into sheer chaos), but a community. As the schoolmen of old said: *individua sunt propter speciem*, the individuals of a kind exist for that kind.

The human person obtains personality through his spiritual element, the soul, which being spiritual transcends time and space. (In scholastic language: personality is based on subsistence which comes to man with

\* *De Monarchia*, I, iv.

the creation of the soul). He obtains individuality through the material quantitative element, the body, and on this quantitative element are based all the other material features of time and space. Individuality makes man a quantity, a number. Through individuality numerical quantity is introduced into the human purpose. But with regard to the kind, number does and can only express limitation of the kind, and as such has nothing to overcome this limitation. And because the number can only mark a limitation of the kind, the isolated individual is an intrinsically inadequate expression of the fullness and unity of the kind. The only way for a number to approach a more adequate expression of the kind is to build up a community in which all the elements commune in the same purpose, and are all complementary. In the case of man this communion is made possible through personality. How does personality become the basis of the human community? The personal element is spiritual, and though not absolute, strives towards the absolute through a continuous process of transcendency. And this process of transcendency is one immense process of communion, communion with God, one's fellow-men and the rest of creation. Through every act of knowledge the spiritual element communes with the object: in a way the soul "becomes" the object which it knows, *anima est quodammodo omnia*, said Aristotle. The will cements this union in its own mysterious way. Thus the person outgrows his self. Because of this power to transcend himself by communion without losing his personality, the human person lives and thrives on communion. Communion is the very breath of personal existence. This seems even so in the blessed Trinity. That is why Bergson was right when, at the end of his long study of Christian mysticism he came to the conclusion that the summit of all true mysticism, the very mystical marriage, is always in one way or other the consecration of the soul to the apostolate, for the good of the human community. It was so in the time of the martyrs, it was so in the case of St. John of the Cross who, like St. Teresa the Great, was destined to reform his order; it was so in the case of Marie de l'In-

carnation who evangelized Canada ; it was so in the case of Thérèse of Lisieux who has been made Patron of the Foreign Missions.

The individual element, though good and with a value of its own, cannot transcend itself, it can only remain itself, and if it does not do so it goes under. And in this self-centredness lies the danger of selfishness and division. If the person identifies himself with his material-individual element instead of leaving the first place to the spiritual-social element, this will lead to opposition and disintegration. The reason why individualism (this wrong tendency of reducing the personal element to the individual element) is a source of incalculable evil is not that it is based on self-centredness and matter, which are good things, but that it leads the person to extol the self to the level of the absolute, the *unum necessarium*, and thereby breaks up the community postulated by human nature, paralyses the person's essential need of transcending matter, of growing, through communion. And this starving of the need for communion is what might be called a "sin against nature". It leads the human person to resent the existence of, or to use merely for his own selfish satisfaction, both God and his fellow-man. Hence it will tend towards reducing religion to a purely self-centred experience ; it will lead to liberalism in society, to capitalism in economics and politics ; it leads to the disintegration of that human race which, as a community is the only adequate expression of the unity and fullness of the one human nature. Without this communion, and its result, the great human community, the human person is not and cannot be fully man.

As to the intrinsic value and beauty of the individual element, it is up to the person to rule, order, foster and trim it so as to make it fit in with the others sharing in the same human purpose for the good of the whole ; support and not hamper the particular contribution of each person ; a source of collaboration and integration instead of a cause of selfishness and disruption. And now we hurry back to the case of moral law, which will illustrate this necessarily somewhat abstract but indispensable preliminary.

## IV

There is authority and there is law. There is obligation, something which *ligat*, binds. To bind the human person means to give him consistency and guidance ; it is all to the good ; it is no limitation of freedom, but only a limitation of arbitrariness. To put the objective before the subjective is not an attack on freedom, nor an attack on the human person. It is to give the person a framework which frees him from the danger of dissolution.

It is true that no outward force, no cherub, no demon, no creature whatever can limit the human person. If the human person is bound all the same, the only reason is that there is deep inside the human person something which bestows not human or creaturely power, but divine power, on authority, law and obligation. This something is the human conscience. And how does the conscience become the link between God and created authority ? As the voice of human nature.

What is the human conscience ? We all know its rarely approving, often disapproving, never failing voice. What voice ? Human conscience is the voice of that innate tendency, that innate purpose in man which directs him towards God. I use the word "innate" deliberately because this word refers to something original, something which lies at the source of our human existence ; it refers to nothing else but our human nature. *Natura*, said the schoolmen, comes from *nasci*, to be born. Conscience, we may say for all practical purposes, is the irrepressible consciousness we have of our human nature, our basic purpose, our *raison d'être*.

If nature is the expression of man's purpose and his very *raison d'être*, life, at its root, is but the working out of this tendency towards union with God. And because this nature is engraved by God (and that directly), it participates in the inviolability and supremacy of God's own Will. And because it participates in this divine inviolability, it bears in itself the principle of sanction, of authority and law. This fundamental tendency of man towards God is therefore an obligation so basic that to deny it would be to go against one's own nature : a

way towards self-destruction. It is this obligation which is the source of all other obligations, of all law : it is the expression of eternal law. It is for man *eternal law* itself. "For when the gentiles, who have not the law, do by nature those things that are of the law ; these having not the law, are a law to themselves : who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness to them, and their thoughts between themselves accusing, or also defending one another." (Rom. ii, 14-15.)

This nature or basic purpose is something very concrete. Whilst demanding the priority of union with God over all else, it demands the priority of spirit over matter, of reason over the senses, and all the consequences of it. Thus the eternal law which lies at the root of our existence, postulates a series of precisions, of fundamental regulations which protect and enforce the eternal law, and which shape man's basic tendency on its course through life. Thus we have the obligation of the worship of God, of the maintenance of personal liberty, justice and the right of living, of marriage and family, and so on. These concrete and detailed "laws" form the *natural law* which derives its force and sanction immediately from its divine source, eternal law.

Lastly, since life comprises a vast scheme of circumstances and possibilities, in which personal liberty and initiative play a preponderant part, natural law gives rise to a vast construction of protective and creative measures, dependent on human reason and conduct. The sum of these prescriptions and regulations, mostly transitory, sometimes lasting, constitutes *positive law*.

Eternal, natural, positive law, the whole structure of concrete human existence is ultimately rooted in the ordinance of God which determines man's own nature. It may be noted, by the way, that it is a flat contradiction in terms if a positive law presumes to abrogate the natural and eternal law. Such a law can have no binding force, because it does not and cannot receive its force and sanction from human nature, from conscience, from God. Thus there is in the very heart of man's being an element, a seed planted there by God Himself directly, a seed which

contains in itself the purpose of man's existence and the plan of working it out. It is the bearer of God's own sovereignty and authority. Its presence at the root of man's being spells the priority of the objective over the subjective; it spells obligation and law for the human self; it spells, at the very core of our self, something which is at once constitutive of and independent of our self. Nature is the expression and manifestation of a God-given and God-made destiny, a God-given function in the fulfilment of His Creation, which is the created reflection of His Goodness, Truth and Unity in the "kosmos", that is, in the harmonious beauty of the universe.

## V

We have seen, so far, that law and authority which form the framework of morality are but the development of that basic law which is human nature. This basic law judges and speaks in a very concrete way through the voice of our conscience. Can we go further? Can we get beyond the fact that human nature expresses a basic law, and find a concrete formula for this law? The Gospel answers this question for us. We are told by Christ Himself that the whole of our life is contained in the fulfilment of two basic commandments, the love of God and the love of our neighbour.

These two commandments form one single commandment. Not only did Christ say that the second was like the first, but in Luke the Old Law is quoted as joining the two in one (x, 27) and in both Matthew and Mark the double commandment is given in answer to the question which was the first commandment of all. In the union of these two commandments, then, the whole purpose of human existence is expressed. In other words, they are the expression of human nature in terms of moral law.

This law with its twofold aspect shows that man's life is failure or success according as it achieves full union with God and with his fellow-man. It is a striving towards communion with God and with man, it is a constant effort to make the true human Self grow through com-



munion with the Source of human nature and with those who, all together, incarnate this same human nature. A man is good in this life not really because of what he is, but because of what he deliberately strives after. (This, may it be noted by the way, shows why that bourgeois Catholicism which marks time in a complacent fulfilment of a few static duties is not "good"; a military duty basis is not enough for Christian "goodness"; it is the urge towards perfection rather than a state of perfection which is the essence of Christian life on this earth: a complacent standstill at whatever stage of spiritual life is diametrically opposed to true Christian perfection.)

There is an important conclusion to be drawn from this interpretation of human nature. If human nature, the basic purpose of human existence, is communion with God and communion with our fellow-man, human life, in the concrete, is the achievement of this communion in the formation of a perfect communion of God, our fellow-man and our Self. In other words, human life is essentially and primarily a community life. Again in other words: if in theory communion, as man's basic purpose, his very nature, is the first norm of all law and morality, the community is the first norm of man's life in the concrete. It is in community that man is and moves.

## VI

The norm of man's existence (in the concrete) is community life with God and his fellow-man. Man, however, is not related to God in the same way as to his fellow-man. Communion with God is his ultimate end. Communion with his fellow-man is not his ultimate end, but the *mode* in which the communion with God must and will be achieved. The mistake is to refuse to admit that both aspects (divine and social) are but different aspects of one single purpose; that both are essential to human nature; that both are so intimately linked up that to neglect the one is to paralyse the other. The man who communes with his fellow-men without making this an approach to God is as absurd as the man who uses his legs for nothing but marking time. And the man who



desires union with God outside communion with his fellow-men is as absurd as the man who wants to walk without legs at all. Christian teaching leaves us no doubt on the indissolubility of these two aspects of human nature. "He that heareth you heareth me" (Luke x, 16). "Amen I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it to me" (Matt. xxv, 40). "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" (Acts, ix, 4). The ultimate end of man is the beatific vision, but it is the vision of a community, a communal vision, as St. John shows in the Apocalypse. The highest form of spiritual life, the so-called mystical marriage, finds its true meaning and eternal fulfilment in the mystical marriage of the Bride with the Lamb, that is, the communal marriage (if I may use this expression) of redeemed mankind, of the Church, with Her Redeemer. The end of our life on this earth is the Particular Judgment at the moment of death, but this Particular Judgment is but the partial anticipation of the communal Last Judgment where mankind will face Christ as one body. It is, then, not astonishing that the whole life of Catholicism is pivoted on the Sacrificial Communion of the Mass, which fulfils by anticipation the final union of the redeemed human community with its God. Wherever we turn, it is communion that lies at the beginning and end of all human achievement. God, once more, is the ultimate end, but the end is primarily and essentially the end of a community, and reached by a community with the means proper to a community. God is the end, the community the way or mode of reaching the end. Both form together the one basic norm of human activity. Both are represented, with authority and sanction, by the mouth-piece of our very nature, our conscience. We shall never be able to run away from God and from our fellow-man because they are there, inside our Self, at the very core of our being.

As man is subject to his conscience, and as our conscience bears witness to our essentially social nature, man is subject to the community. As a norm, therefore, the community is superior to the individual person. It is the community which decides the moment, or at least the

possibility, of our very existence. It is the community which assigns us our role, our share in the communal achievement. All our existence is moulded by the community. On the other hand, the individual person is the basic element of the community. It is in the person that lies vested the responsibility for the execution of the community purpose. Responsibility implies freedom, not to thwart the community life, but to foster it by personal contribution. The person—at least in Christian teaching—has no right to determine his ultimate end. This is God-given, both in its object and in its mode. He may and must freely determine how to work out his contribution. It is in the personal conscience of each that individual freedom and responsibility are harmonized with God and the human community. If God and the community (the whole human race) are supreme as norm, the individual person is supreme as free and responsible executive.

The individualistic conception of the human person is both incomplete and false. The only true conception of the person is that which integrates God and the human community into the human Self as its end and mode. Such is the conception of the "integral" person which is the basis of the conception of integral Christianity. It is confirmed by modern psychology which discerns at the root of man's activity a "will-to-power" and a "will-to-community". This is why the person, the Self, is the age-old battlefield where the human purpose is frustrated or fulfilled. This is why each person bears in his conscience not only the right to an inviolable freedom but also the direct responsibility for the human community as a whole. Growing through a constant process of transcendency, a process of communion with the objects of his knowledge and his love, a process of self-denial, he becomes the seat of a truly cosmic vocation, bearing the personal responsibility for a cosmic achievement. The only form of society which can truly be the basis of a Christian world-order is the society based on this integral conception of the person, with God and the community as the supreme norm and the individual person as the supreme executive.

It is now easy to establish a scale of social values in this Christian world-order :

(a) First is God, the beginning and end of any realistic world-order in any time and any circumstances.

(b) The Human Community which, as the only adequate expression of human nature, shares in the sovereignty, authority and sanctions which God has vested directly in this human nature. The community of mankind as a whole is, as the adequate and concrete expression of human nature, the supreme concrete norm according to which man must reach union with his Maker.

(c) The Individual Person who bears the basic responsibility for the communal vocation is supreme as the executive. Hence his inviolable right to freedom.

(d) The Family which is essentially nursery of human persons with individual responsibility for a communal vocation. The education of these two elements can only be undertaken on a basis of true family life founded on indissoluble marriage and sound procreation. To destroy the family is to smother true personal development in the cradle.

(e) The State, which is a group of individuals constituted for the protection (not the domination) of all that is implied in the four preceding points.

(f) The organic Union of all States for a world-wide collaboration on a basis of complementary co-ordination. And so we return to that Universal Community with which we started, and the circle is complete.

It is, therefore, a basic mistake to identify the State with the human community as such. In placing the State first, the Community can no longer be the norm, nor the individual person the executive of the common vocation of mankind. "Statism", as the late Pope called this tendency, and the concept of a vocational society are mutually exclusive. On the other hand, communism and collectivism which make the community not only the supreme norm, but also the supreme executive are equally opposed to a vocational society. For in this society the communal vocation is primarily vested in the individual person with responsibility and freedom. Communism is the more dangerous because the more subtle of the two,

and more liable to use for its own ends certain attractive and generous aspects of vocational society.

If all this is exact, it is not to be wondered at that the ideal of the Christian world-order finds its prototype in the Church, the *Ecclesia* of Christ, conceived as redeemed mankind, realizing in each individual person the final communion of mankind as a whole with God in Christ. For *Ecclesia* is a Greek word, coming from *καλέω* which means to call. Its true meaning is a gathering based on a divine call, in other words, a vocational community. This is the ideal of St. Augustine's *Christus Totus*. Will it ever be realized in this vale of tears? That is not the question. The question is that it is the ideal for which we must strive, heart and soul, for the true ideal is the only fully true reality. As to whether we shall realize it, that is God's business. But we may suppose that He will look after His part of the fulfilment; that He will collaborate in having His Will done on earth as it is in heaven.

THEODORE WESSELING, O.S.B.

## NIETZSCHE AND NATIONAL SOCIALISM

**I**BSEN depicts the dying Julian as uttering the words "Vicisti O Galilae!"—a phrase rendered more familiar to us probably by Swinburne's lines, "Thou hast conquered, O Pale Galilaean, the earth has grown grey at Thy breath." The apostate emperor sees that his attempt to restore the joy of the full human life, the earthly richness of paganism, has failed; the grey shadows of Christianity cannot be driven from the earth. The misconception of the nature of Christianity implied by this attitude—namely that Christianity aims at stunting, spoiling and impoverishing human nature in favour of an artificial, pinchbeck and ascetic ideal—is of course one feature at any rate of the National-Socialist *Weltanschauung*. But there is a marked contrast between the "Naturalism" of the Nazis and the "Naturalism" of what we might call the old pagan humanistic mentality. Those rather self-conscious individuals, who at various times in the Christian era have delighted to think of themselves as pagans and humanists, have indeed rejected Christianity, as involving a denial of human values, but they rejected it in favour of the merely human, glorifying the natural, carefree pagan, set free from the intolerable weight of the Christian's sombre message. Not that the historical pagan of classical times was in reality the carefree man whom the humanists imagined in their daydreams; but the neo-pagan of the humanistic type thought, at any rate, that if Christianity were assigned to the lumber room, man would be enabled to enjoy his proper human heritage—in short, to be himself. They invented the merely natural man. Christianity is an encumbrance, an insult to man's nature; subtract Christianity and you get the natural man. Live naturally and all will be well.

Nazi philosophy—if one may be excused for demeaning a noble science by such an epithet—also rejects Christianity as an anti-value; but to the theorist of the National-Socialist movement Christianity is not so much an encumbrance to the merely natural man as a hindrance to

the development of the "more-than-man", the Superman. The old neo-pagan laid his emphasis on man, *Mensch*; the Nazi theorist lays his emphasis on the "Super", on the *Über* in *Übermensch*. National-Socialism does not aim at enabling the natural, carefree man to enjoy himself in his freedom, but at transcending man as he is, at producing the Superman. The Renaissance pagan, and others after him, desired to set man free to be himself. Not so the Führer of the National-Socialist movement. He desires to force man to be more than himself. The carefree pagan, expressing himself in the *Carpe diem* attitude to life, is not at all the same as the future production of the "Ordensburgen". "In my Ordensburgen a youth will grow up before which the world will shrink back. A violently active, dominating, intrepid, brutal youth—that is what I am after . . .".\* Here is all the difference between *Mensch* and *Übermensch*. The values of Christendom are denied, not in favour of man, but in favour of Superman.

The neo-paganism, then, of the National-Socialist movement aims not so much at being liberative as at being creative. Ultimately, of course, it is simply destructive, for a movement that refuses to accept man as he comes from the hands of his Creator, and tries to mould him in a way contrary to the designs of Divine Providence, cannot be anything else. But whatever the actual fate of the movement may be and wherever its dynamic energy may lead it, it professes to be creative. It may be nihilistic in point of fact, but it is creative in the conscious intention of its Leader. Its creation is to be the Superman, the new Aristocrat, the new *Herrenklasse*.

One has only to look at letters and articles in reviews, weekly and daily papers, to see these ideas of the Nazis coupled with the name of Nietzsche. Historians of philosophy—and others—may dispute as to the extent to which the doctrine that might is right is to be ascribed to Hegel or can be justifiably deduced from the writings of Hegel (cf. the article by Professor Knox in *Philosophy* for January 1940, and E. F. Carr's answer and criticism

\* Hitler as reported by Hermann Rauschning in *Hitler Speaks*, p. 247.



in the April number); but they agree that Nietzsche has not been without some influence on the mentality of modern Germany. And indeed it is obvious that openly to criticize and reject the doctrines characteristic of Nietzsche in National-Socialist Germany would inevitably win for the critic suspicion and mistrust. It may therefore be of some interest to readers who are not acquainted with the actual writings of Nietzsche to indicate some of the points where, in the opinion of the author of the present article, the National-Socialist ideology seems either to approximate to the doctrine of Nietzsche or to diverge from it. For Nietzsche, if not a parent of National-Socialism, is at least an adopted patron—though, for reasons to be cited, it may well be doubted if Nietzsche would have looked with favour on his National-Socialist client. Indeed one is tempted to think that the great majority of the European thinkers, who are sometimes credited by correspondents to newspapers and reviews with having had a share in bringing to the light of day the modern German regime, would disclaim their supposed infant with some show of indignation. However, leaving aside for the moment the question what Nietzsche might be expected to think of the National-Socialism of modern Germany, we would rather draw attention first to the fundamental doctrines and attitudes of Nietzsche, which are paralleled in the Nazi movement, and which have been adopted by individual National-Socialists.

It is not of course suggested that other German philosophers have been without influence on the modern German mentality or have not been utilized by National-Socialism. The name of Fichte will immediately occur in this connection. In the winter of 1807-8, i.e. after the Peace of Tilsit, Fichte delivered in Berlin his famous "Addresses to the German People", in which he not only endeavours to fire the patriotism of the Germans in a trying period of their history, but clearly maintains that the members of the German race are the "consecrated and inspired ones of a Divine World-Plan". "It is you", says Fichte to the Germans, "to whom, out of all other modern nations, the germs of human perfection are



especially committed, and to whom the foremost place in the onward advance towards their development is assigned."

Moreover Fichte's philosophy is essentially activist and dynamic, a character which obviously commends it to the Nazis. "For action art thou here ; thine action, and thine action alone, determine thy worth." The non-ego is produced by the Ego simply as a field for the latter's self-development. The universe is a field for action by Spirit ; it is like a ninepin set up to be knocked down. Man's vocation is "not for idle contemplation—nor for brooding over devout sensations", but for action ; and the German people is divinely called to be the leaders in this dynamic movement of self-realization by action.

But in spite of this activism, in spite of the fact that in his later writings Fichte tended to emphasize the vanishing importance of individual personality, it is but fair to point out other aspects of his doctrine, e.g. his doctrine of the State, which, while enabling him to be called by Gustav Schmoller Germany's first Socialist author, yet evoked Hegel's criticism to the effect that Fichte conceived the State as "a formal, external uniting and connecting, in which the individuals as such are held to be absolute, in which Right is the highest principle".\*

That National-Socialism is a revolution is a commonplace today. Whatever be the value attached to the Socialist side of its programme, and even if the present alliance with Russia and the emphasis on the affinities of Nazism and the Soviet system and ideology be discounted as a passing opportunism, even if the liquidation of Captain Röhm and his followers in 1934 be regarded as a victory for more conservative elements, it still remains true that Nazism is a revolution. It is a break with the past, with former political, religious and social conceptions ; it is a dynamic urge—ultimately to destruction—but, as far as the conscious intention of the Leader goes, to the building up of a new order of things in Germany, Europe, and finally the world. It is hard to believe that

\* Hegel, *Hist. Phil.* vol. 3.

the so-called Nazi ideology is simply a frill, that all can be explained away in terms of graft, opportunism, personal self-seeking, sadistic cruelty and so on. It is much more probable that Adolf Hitler's conception of a new world order on a German and racial basis, dominated by the new *Herrenklasse*, is a driving motive in the Movement, despite all graft and individualistic egoism on the part, not only of subordinates, but also of Party bosses.

The past is to be eliminated. Hitler himself has drawn the distinction between the old type of man and the new type of man which is to be created by National Socialism, the new élite of the new order. This is a revolutionary aim, which can only be accomplished by revolutionary methods, by denying former values and destroying former traditions, by stern discipline and training in the service of the Revolution, to ensure that the past does not linger on into the present and contaminate the new creation. Indeed the truth, which was long ago seen by thinkers like Christopher Dawson, is now becoming more and more clear to all, that there is a very real affinity between National-Socialism and Bolshevism as it has developed in modern Russia. Marxism as a philosophy may be dead in Germany, but the materialist revolution remains.

National-Socialism is then revolutionary. But that is not at all the same as to say that the revolutionary spirit is something entirely new in Germany. The Youth Movement certainly possessed, even if without full realization of the fact, a revolutionary spirit. There was an urge to the new and the unknown, even in the Catholic Youth Movement, exemplified in its songs and its hiking; and when Adolf Hitler supplied the concrete aim, it is not surprising that his new movement attracted many of the youth from their former allegiances, even apart from compulsion. The present writer well remembers being on top of a mountain in Germany several years ago with some youths who had belonged to the Catholic *Neu Deutschland*. They were excellent Catholics and had no sympathy with the erroneous doctrines and the brutality of Hitlerism. A party of old-type Germans, a "bourgeois" family, arrived, puffing and panting, at the summit, calling to one another and full of joviality and

*Gemütlichkeit*, ready for a drink and some *Kuchen*. The writer's young friends proceeded to make fun of this family, which appeared to be eminently pleasant and "unmilitary", on the grounds that it exemplified an out-dated spirit, "Victorianism", not in sympathy with the new Germany. A trivial episode perhaps, but I could not help feeling that my young Catholic friends had more in common with the spirit of the National-Socialist movement than they themselves realized—in this at least, that a revolutionary spirit was alive in both and an opposition to the past, though in Nazism that spirit was turned to the service of an ideology, which could not be acceptable to loyal Catholics.

This affinity between the revolutionary element of the Youth Movement and Nazism is noticed by Hermann Rauschning in his book, *Germany's Revolution of Destruction*, when he writes :

The youth movement which we all know, the movement to which we all belonged in our time as senior schoolboys, was the first start of the revolutionary dynamism which today is culminating in the doctrineless revolution and turning into its own opposite. . . . The youthful restlessness of the original movement may have turned into a revolutionary restlessness of a very brutal sort but there is no doubt that beneath the "hiking" for its own sake, or the urge to get on the move in order to still the inner revolutionary unrest, and today's random revolutionary dynamism with its rage for marching, there are deep common elements.\*

The revolutionary spirit was the spirit of Nietzsche, a spirit which he expressed, not in any clear-cut and systematic philosophy but in swift statement, in hyperbole, in poetry. Once a professor of classical philology he became the poet-philosopher of revolution, the revolution not of the herd but of nature's aristocrat. Nietzsche, who as a child wanted to become a parson, who walked slowly home through the heavy rain without overcoat or umbrella on his way back from school because, as he told his mother, "our school regulations say that boys when coming from school are not to run in the streets", became a trenchant critic of the Christian

\* Pp. 68-69.

religion and of Christian morality, of tradition, belief and regulation which hamper the free spirit of man. He who was overwhelmed by the horrors that he witnessed in 1870, lauded the benefits of war; he who was subject to constant ill-health and who in 1889 lost his reason, glorified the Superman and the Will to Power. Nietzsche is certainly a fascinating subject for a psychologist.

Nietzsche revolted against reason, against philosophy, particularly against idealist philosophy. The idealists, he considered, set up an antithesis between the true world, i.e. the "ideal" world, and the apparent world—in plain English, comments Nietzsche, between "the fictitious world and reality". "Hitherto", he says, "the lie of the ideal has been the curse of reality; by means of it the very source of mankind's instincts has become mendacious and false; so much so that those values have come to be worshipped which are the exact opposite of the ones which would secure man's prosperity, his future, and his great right to a future."\* Small wonder then that he says in *Ecce Homo*, "Leibniz and Kant—these two great breaks upon the intellectual honesty of Europe!" (p. 125). Again in the same book he asks: "Was a single one of the philosophers who preceded me a psychologist at all, and not the very reverse of a psychologist—that is to say, a 'superior swindler', an 'Idealist'?" Nietzsche then cannot abide the dichotomy set up by idealism between the world of "reality" and the world of "appearance", i.e. this world. Plato's invention of the Good on Itself is "the worst, the most tiresome and the most dangerous of errors hitherto".†

But Nietzsche does not attack idealism with so much vigour merely because he regards it as a falsification of reality, a lie against the reality of human life and the external world, but he considers it to be based on moral doctrine, moral interests and moral presuppositions. In his *Criticism of Philosophy* he comments: "Fundamental aspect: Kant's, Hegel's, Schopenhauer's, the sceptical and epochist, the historifying and the pessimistic attitudes—all have a moral origin. I have found no one who has

\* Preface to *Ecce Homo*.

† *Beyond Good and Evil*. Preface.

dared to criticize the moral valuations." This is true, Nietzsche thinks (and indeed there is a considerable amount of truth in his supposition—witness the predominantly ethical orientation of Kant's philosophy) of the whole course of the history of philosophy. "Since Plato philosophy has lain under the dominion of morality": Kant and Hegel carried on this tradition.

The history of philosophy is the story of a secret and mad hatred of the prerequisites of life, of the feelings which make for the real values of Life, and of all partisanship of Life. Philosophers have never hesitated to affirm a fanciful world, provided it contradicts this world, and furnished them with a weapon, wherewith they could calumniate this world . . . I fear that it is still the Circe of philosophers . . . Morality, which plays them the trick of compelling them to be for ever slanderers. . . . This life is immoral. . . . And it is based upon immoral first principles, and morality says nay to Life.

In his earlier days Nietzsche greatly admired Schopenhauer, and was strongly influenced by him. In *Schopenhauer as Educator* Nietzsche tells us that he belonged "to those readers of Schopenhauer who know perfectly well, after they have turned the first page, that they will read all the others, and listen to every word that he has spoken". He praised Schopenhauer's style, as also his attitude to the "academic" philosophers, the way in which he "makes small account of the learned tribe"—though, as all historians of philosophy know, Schopenhauer's attitude towards the university professors was prompted to a considerable extent by jealousy and resentment at the scant recognition which was accorded to his writings—the irrational Will not being able at the time to oust the Reason of the dominant Hegelian philosophy.

Analysing Schopenhauer's influence on him, Nietzsche finds three elements in it, "his honesty, his joy, and his consistency". ("Joy", says Nietzsche, "because his thought has conquered the greatest difficulties.") Schopenhauer would have none of the "lovely Hegel-corn", so dear to the Prussian State; he had the courage to speak the truth, produced a "terrible" philosophy—and helped to complete Nietzsche's break with Christianity. Moreover Nietzsche reckoned Schopenhauer

among the European men, along with Napoleon, Goethe, Heine and others. "He made England, France and Italy equally his home, and felt no little sympathy with the Spanish character."

Later, however, Nietzsche bitterly criticizes Schopenhauer for being under the dominion and delusion of morality. His doctrine "that *pity* is to be found at the root of every moral impulse that has ever existed hitherto, is to be guilty of a degree of nonsense and ingenuousness worthy only of a thinker who is devoid of all historical instincts and who has miraculously succeeded in evading the strong schooling in history which the Germans, from Herder to Hegel, have undergone".\* Schopenhauer declared high intellectuality to be the *emancipation* from the will; he did not wish to recognize the freedom from moral prejudices which is coincident with the emancipation of a great mind; he refused to see what is the typical immorality of genius; he artfully contrived to set up the only moral value he honoured—self-effacement, as the one *condition* of highest intellectual activity, "objective" contemplation. "Truth, even in art, only manifests itself after the withdrawal of the *will* . . ."† In spite then of the formative influence of Schopenhauer's doctrine of Will on Nietzsche's theory of the Will to Power, Schopenhauer is finally rejected by Nietzsche as a devotee of that Circe, Morality, and in *Ecce Homo* he is classed among the "unconscious swindlers", with Liebniz, Kant, Fichte, Schelling, Hegel and Schleiermacher.

According to Nietzsche, therefore, philosophy, and in particular idealist philosophy (which would include all philosophy that posited a truer world beyond this one), is ultimately based upon moral presuppositions. It is therefore inimical to life, for life is fundamentally immoral. Morality, traditional morality, hampers and chains life. (We must protest strongly—for reasons obvious to anyone well acquainted with the philosophy of Henri Bergson—at attempts to link up Bergson and Nietzsche in this respect merely because both thinkers lay

\* *Will to Power, A Criticism of Morality*, ss. 366.

† *Ibid.* ss. 382.



stress on Life.) This anti-intellectualist attitude, this vital dynamism, this emphasis on action, this hatred of the Transcendent and Ideal, is characteristic also of National-Socialist ideology. The decline in the level of German education, the shrinking in the number of those attending German universities, is significant. It is not simply due to the practical exigencies of military training and so on; it is consciously willed by the leaders of the Party. "We are now at the end of the age of Reason", says Hitler. "The intellect has grown autocratic, and has become a disease of life."\* Again, "There is no such thing as truth either in the moral or in the scientific sense." "We approach the realities of the world only in strong emotion and in action. I have no love for Goethe. But I am ready to overlook much in him for the sake of one phrase—'In the beginning was action'. Only the man who acts becomes conscious of the real world. Men misuse their intelligences. It is not the seat of a special dignity of mankind"—so Hitler does not agree with Aristotle—"but merely an instrument in the struggle for life—Contemplative natures, retrospective like all intellectuals, are dead persons who miss the meaning of life."† Therefore "we must distrust the intelligence and the conscience, and must place trust in our instincts. We have to regain a new simplicity."‡

To the Leader of the National-Socialist movement the intellect is therefore merely an instrument to action. (And in case anyone at this point murmurs "Bergson", let us hasten to point out that the mystical intuition, which Bergson places above intelligence—the latter used in the scholastic sense of "ratio"—finds no place in Hitler's scheme.) And, as with Nietzsche, conscience and "morality" find themselves in the same boat as intellect. Hitler might equally well with Nietzsche speak of "the Tartuffery of old Kant".

Morality, according to Nietzsche, is "The idiosyncrasy of decadents, actuated by a desire to avenge themselves with success upon life".§ Morality is a phenomenon

\* *Hitler Speaks*, p. 220.

† *Ibid.*, p. 221.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 222.

§ *Ecce Homo*.



of decadence and an enemy to life, it is the great No to life. But what does Nietzsche mean by life? He means the Will to Power. Morality then is a denial of the Will to Power, a denial of what is essentially great in man. The morality of unselfishness, altruism and self-renunciation is Decadence. "The teachers and leaders of mankind—including the theologians—have been, every one of them, decadents; hence their transvaluation of all values into a hostility towards life; hence morality." Morality is Vampirism, draining life of its energy and blood. Its purpose is simply preservation, whether of the individual, the community, the race, the state, the church or the culture. Traditional morality is thus ultimately the endeavour on the part of a group to preserve itself, and that group is really the herd as opposed to the great and exceptional man. The herd has an instinctive desire to preserve itself, to keep nature's Aristocrat in subjection, and so invents morality, chaining down the naturally free and dynamic man. "The whole of the morality of Europe," says Nietzsche "is based upon the values which are useful to the herd." Behind the moral valuations of Europe, and above all behind Christian moral valuations, there lie concealed three powers: the instinct of the herd as opposed to the strong and independent; the instinct of all sufferers and "abortions" as opposed to the happy and well-constituted; and the instinct of the mediocre opposed to the exceptions. It is therefore only by breaking through the herd-morality and acquiring spiritual freedom that the natural leaders, those who say "yes" to life, those in whom the Will to Power is strong, will go forward towards the ideal of the Superman. The old values of neighbour-love, pity, self-renunciation, must be discarded in favour of personalism, egoism, freedom and strength. (Schopenhauerian "pity" is thrown overboard as unwanted ballast.)

This criticism of morality is applied by Nietzsche to Christian morality in particular, which he declares to be "the most malignant form of all falsehood, the actual Circe of humanity; that which has corrupted mankind". It is "the crime against life", in which "anti-nature itself

received the highest honours as morality and as law, and remained suspended over man as the Categorical Imperative". Christian morality is anaemic and, according to Nietzsche, aims at drying up and extirpating the passions.

This attitude of Nietzsche is reflected in the teaching of National-Socialism. "The Ten Commandments", said Hitler, "have lost their validity." In a blasphemous production circulated in Hitler Youth circles in Vienna and seen by the present writer, a contrast is drawn between Christ, who died whining on a cross, and the strong man of new Germany. And the uprooting of old values in the Party has gone on to such an extent that Hermann Rauschning can write: "The unscrupulousness that has developed in the ranks of the S.A. and S.S. must sooner or later have a fatal reaction on the general membership. Behind a few well-worn clichés about loyalty to the Leader and about the German nation there is concealed an outlook of undiluted materialism and a lust for every sort of violence, which will never be drilled out of the Storm Troops again." \* The reduction to practice of Nietzschean principles leads, not to the god-man, but to the beast.

As Nietzsche criticizes morality, so too, of course, does he criticize and reject religion, and above all Christianity. That he misinterpreted Christianity is true, but that he rejected it is a fact which cannot simply be explained away as though it were a sort of unintentional lapse from good behaviour. "Paganism", says Nietzsche, "is that which says yea to all that is natural, it is innocence in being natural, naturalness. Christianity is that which says no to all that is natural, it is a certain lack of dignity in being natural; hostility to Nature." Nietzsche borrows outmoded conceptions of past critics. Thus he maintains that the doctrines of the Last Judgement, etc., were the interpolations of Churchmen, that the Church changed the antitheses "true life" and "false life" into "life here" and "life beyond" and added on all other manner of lies and falsification, making "an appalling stew of Greek philosophy and Judaism; asceticism; continual judgments and condemnations; the order of rank, etc.". The

\* *Germany's Revolution of Destruction*, p. 82.

chief sinner in this respect was the "decadent" Paul, who set about elevating the Figure of the "master-seducer" of the populace.

Christianity is a Nihilistic Religion, in the sense that truthfulness, which it elevated to the rank of a virtue, turns at last against Christianity itself and exposes its falsity. But once the Christian interpretation of the meaning of existence has been overthrown it seems as though there were no meaning in existence at all, for the very reason that Christianity was held to be *the* interpretation. As a matter of fact, thinks Nietzsche, Christianity was pretty well on its last legs at the time of the Renaissance and was about to make way for the revival of paganism, when Luther, "that cursed monk", not only restored the Church (by occasioning the Reformation), but, what was a thousand times worse, restored Christianity.

Nietzsche does not, be it noted, criticize the Christian religion from the standpoint of Christian moral valuations, but as being inimical to the true welfare of man, the higher man, the real fruit and affirmation of human nature—ultimately to the coming of Superman. Christianity and alcohol are "the two great means of corruption",\* because they degrade man. This conception of Christianity as anaemic, paralysing, degrading to man, is a common feature of the National-Socialist movement. They think that Christianity is essentially a religion of slaves, an insult to human nature. It may be all very well for the herd, for those relics of the past, who are too old or too fixed in their habits and outlook on life to be changed; but if the new man is to be produced, the power of Christianity must be broken. The priest may retire to the sacristy and church and minister to antiquated devotees, but the youth of the nation is to be saved from his clutches in order that it may be formed in new moulds.

But if Nietzsche revolts against the Christian religion and morality he does so as a step to the assertion of new values. Hence his book *The Will to Power* is termed "Attempted Transvaluation of all Values". He did not seek mere destruction, but also construction. Nihilism

\* *Anti-Christ*, p. 60.

is but a necessary step on the road to the assertion of new values. It is a mistake to regard him as exalting vice as such—even if he does put in a word for Cesare Borgia—he desired a new valuation. The common herd indeed can, and should, retain their own morality, but “the leaders of the herd require a fundamentally different valuation for their actions, as do also the independent ones or the beasts of prey, etc.”. These leaders are the Supermen, and Nietzsche aims at a “new order of rank”, i.e. the rank of the free man, the *Übermensch* who transcends the common herd. In the prologue to *Thus Spake Zarathustra* Nietzsche depicts Zarathustra as speaking to the people and saying: “I teach you the Superman. Man is something that is to be surpassed—What is the ape to man? A laughing-stock, a thing of shame.” “Man,” says Zarathustra, “is a rope stretched between the animal and the Superman—a rope over an abyss.” “I want to teach men the sense of their existence, which is the Superman, the lightning out of the dark cloud-man.” Democracy is hateful, since it affirms the equality of all; it is the doctrine of the herd, of the weak and botched, who seek to protect themselves against the strong.

The conception of the new man, the Superman, is also a conception of Adolf Hitler. “Creation,” he is reported to have said, “is not yet an end. At all events not so far as the creature Man is concerned. The old type of man will have but a stunted existence. All creative energy will be concentrated in the new one—I might call the two varieties the god-man and the mass-animal. Yes, man has to be passed and surpassed.”\* The German Chancellor has the grace to acknowledge a debt to Nietzsche. “Nietzsche did, it is true, realize something of this, in his way. He went so far as to recognize the superman as a new biological variety. But he was not too sure of it. Man is becoming God—that is the simple fact. Man is God in making.”† This new man is, of course, the youth of the Ordensburgen, the élite, which the selective and intensive Nazi

\* *Hitler Speaks*, p. 241.

† *Ibid.*, p. 242.

training is intended to produce. This new "Order", the *Herrenklasse*, will rule the world, with the ordinary members of the Party below them, and subject races still lower down. This is the "violently active, dominating, intrepid, brutal youth". Nietzsche may have left in obscurity the lineaments of his Superman, but National-Socialism is endeavouring to draw these lineaments in actuality before our eyes—and the prospect is not a pleasing one. Well might the Führer exclaim: "I will tell you a secret. I have seen the vision of the new man—fearless and formidable. I shrank from him!" \*

So far we have indicated points of resemblance between the ideology of Nietzsche and that of the German Leader. But there is at least one remarkable point of contrast. National-Socialist ideology is fundamentally racial, and the favoured race is the Aryan, above all as realized in the German. To see this it is only necessary to read the pronouncements of Party Leaders and the effusions of the tame philosophers of the movement. But Nietzsche is the very man who wrote in his Autobiography: "Wherever Germany extends her sway, she ruins culture." Again he goes so far as to say: "The Germans are canaille. A man lowers himself by frequenting the society of Germans." That the man who regretted the overthrow of Napoleon and exalted war (in the sense that he points out the benefits of war in much the same way as Hegel—while at the same time he expressly condemns the modern nationalistic wars of European nations among themselves, comparing them to the senseless fighting of Greek City against Greek City) should be in favour with the neo-pagans and amoral leaders of his nation, is understandable; but it is sometimes forgotten that Nietzsche declared that the culture which, according to Von Treitschke, German military domination would spread throughout Europe, is no culture at all, and that he ridiculed the phrase *Deutschland über Alles*, and said of the Germans, "Every great crime against culture for the last four centuries lies on their conscience". The present writer does not wish to identify himself with Nietzsche's ideas on the Germans as a

\* *Hitler Speaks*, p. 243.

nation ; he merely quotes these remarks to show that it is absurd to speak as though Nietzsche were an adherent of the German Race Theory or even of narrow nationalism. His ancestors, so he tells us, were Polish noblemen, and his sympathies were European. In the *Twilight of the Idols* he says that "Goethe is the last German whom I respect". Goethe who was "no mere German, but an European event". He tells us that "I believe only in French culture and regard everything else in Europe which calls itself 'culture' as a misunderstanding. I do not even take the German kind into consideration". It is true that the Nazis would also reject the culture of the old Germany, but what would they make of his praise of Heine, the Jew, "who gave me the most perfect idea of what a lyrical poet could be" ?

As to the Jews in general Nietzsche certainly passes some very hard criticisms on that "instinctively crafty people". But how would the Pogrom of 1938 appear in the eyes of a man, who wrote : "Among present-day Germans there is alternately the anti-French folly, the anti-Semitic folly, the anti-Polish folly, the Christian-romantic folly, the Wagnerian folly, the Teutonic folly, the Prussian folly (just look at those poor historians, the Sybels and the Treitschkes, and their closely bandaged heads), and whatever else these little obscurations of the German spirit and conscience may be called" ? \* Indeed it is quite clear that if Nietzsche were alive today he would add to the "anti-Semitic folly" the National-Socialist folly. The glorification of the German Spirit and its domination over Europe would be anathema to Nietzsche, however much the Nazis may have borrowed from his ideas. The doctrine of the Superman, the denial of the Christian religion and morality, the glorification of life and vigour, would not suffice to conceal from Nietzsche the narrow and maniacal nationalism that lies beneath all high-sounding phrases. Did not Nietzsche write :

A little more fresh air, for Heaven's sake ! This ridiculous condition of Europe must not last any longer. Is there a single

\* *Beyond Good and Evil*, p. 207.



idea behind this bovine nationalism? What positive value can there be in encouraging this arrogant self-conceit when everything points today to greater and more common interests—at a moment when the spiritual dependence and denationalization, which are obvious to all, are paving the way for the reciprocal rapprochements and fertilizations which make up the real value and sense of present-day culture? The economic unity of Europe must come.

But even if Adolf Hitler would not appear to Nietzsche to be an adequate embodiment of his ideal, there is at least something common to them both, and that is a tendency to madness. That Nietzsche actually lost his reason and imagined that he was the King of Italy or even God is well-known; but this madness is foreshadowed by the chapter titles of *Ecce Homo*, e.g. "Why I am so Wise", "Why I am so Clever", "Why I Write Such excellent books", and by such statements as "To take up one of my books is one of the rarest honours that a man can pay himself", or "Other books simply cannot be endured after mine, and least of all philosophical ones", or "Before my time people did not know what could be done with the German language—what could be done with language in general". This sort of assertion is akin to the alleged words of Adolf Hitler: "I am the greatest German who has ever lived. Mankind, led by the German race, is now in a period of transition, just as it was when men first began to pass from the ape-like into the human stage. Now they are passing from the human into the super-human stage. I have preceded them. In so far as there is a God in this world, I am He." But he who sets himself up above man, may well end by losing the use of that which is the special dignity of man, the human reason.

Nietzsche is, as we have seen, no mere anarchist or destroyer of values; he demanded a translation of values and asserted new values. That is to say, Nietzsche laid emphasis, a decided over-emphasis, on certain values, such as life, liberty, natural vigour and strength, to the exclusion of others. He discerned only one section of the "valuational field" and was blind to other values. For example, he stressed love of the remote, of the future



man, *die Fernstenliebe* to the disregard of brotherly love, *die Nächstenliebe*. This process has been carried to an extravagant length by the Nazis, who have laid their strongest emphasis on a blind and stupid nationalism, which would have been abhorrent to Nietzsche. They have blinded themselves to the values of other nations and other races. There is a marked blindness to the totality of values, as well as an emphasis on what are mainly lower values on the part of both Nietzsche and the National-Socialists. The Nazis are guilty of that blindness to values of which Professor Nicolai Hartmann speaks, when, after treating of the individual's blindness to and ignoring of values, he asks: "Is not party prejudice the same thing in the life of the State; is not chauvinism the same thing in the history of the world? One people is struck with blindness as regards the distinctive character and world-mission of another. He who, as a single individual, does not look lovingly about him will also, as a citizen of the State, misunderstand and hate and, as a citizen of the world, will sow slander and discord."\*

The National-Socialists, therefore, though agreeing with Nietzsche in a blindness to the totality of values and in an over-emphasis of certain values, go further than Nietzsche in their blindness. The latter saw clearly the value of European civilization: he ardently desired a united Europe, condemning a narrow nationalism and seeing clearly what would happen as a result of the war of 1870. He foresaw the growth of Prussian militarism and the spirit of Empire, and he loathed the very name of the German Empire. Thus, although some of his ideas have been used by German Nationalists, they have been used for an end quite alien to the intention of their author. For the ideals of Nietzsche were not those of the Treitschkes and Houston Chamberlains of Prussian and imperialistic Germany.

Yet in spite of this we cannot overlook the fact that Nietzsche, who was European in sympathy and ideal, sought to undermine the very factors that have made European civilization and that alone render its preservation and development possible, the Christian religion and

\* Hartmann, *Ethics*, I, p. 41.

Christian moral standards. It is true that he made a distinction between Catholicism and German Lutheranism, and that his attacks were directed mainly against the latter. But it is also true that he denies Christianity as such, and in this he is followed by the National-Socialists. He professed also to dissent from the Platonic and Aristotelian characterization of man as essentially rational; and the Nazis exaggerate Nietzsche's emphasis on action to an absurd extent.

Nietzsche considered that he was setting man free from his shackles, revealing the natural man and driving him onward, or calling him upward, to the goal of the Superman. But in the process he falsifies man, cutting him away from his roots and taking from him his end in eternity. The world is not simply amoral and without end, an eternally recurrent cycle, as Nietzsche thought; it comes from God and exists for the glory of God, and man, the high-priest of creation, comes from the creative hand of God and has a supernatural end in God. He is not set between Nothingness and Nothingness, as Nietzsche or Heidegger would have us believe, but between God and God.

Nietzsche attacks the superficial, bourgeois spirit, content with the trifling interests of the herd, as Kierkegaard did. But while, like Kierkegaard, he pierces through the superficial with his destructive criticism, he, unlike Kierkegaard, neglects the depths, the depths of eternity, the profundities of the Transcendent Godhead. Nietzsche demanded the realization of Man. Well and good, but it is the whole man that should be realized, man in all his potentialities, and in the light of his supernatural and divine vocation. Nietzsche decried the stunting of man, but the result of his ideology is itself the mutilation and denial of man. The solution lies, not with Nietzsche, still less with the Nazis, but with Augustine; for man is made, not for this life only, not for the senseless Will to Power, but for the vision of the living God.

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## CHRISTIANITY AND CLASSICAL CULTURE

*Christianity and Classical Culture. A Study in Thought and Action from Augustus to Augustine.* By C. N. Cochrane. (Pp. vii + 523. Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1940. Price £1 10s.)

**A**MONG the art-treasures of the Vatican is an eighth-century ivory plaque known as the "Cross of Rambona". It represents the Crucifixion—Our Lord in the centre flanked by our Lady and St. John. But the Cross is not planted on Golgotha; it stands above the cave of the Lupercal, wherein is depicted the most venerable and familiar symbol of ancient Rome, the famous group of the She-wolf suckling the Twins. Four centuries earlier Constantine the Great struck a small silver medallion with a remarkable portrait of himself upon its obverse. The Emperor is shown almost full-face, wearing a helmet with the Christian monogram emblazoned on its crest, leading a horse by the bridle and carrying in his left hand a sceptre and circular shield. The shield is decorated with the same scene at the Lupercal—the *Lupa Romana* and the Twins. But if we carry our eyes upwards from the shield to the sceptre we notice that the latter is in the form of a Cross combined with a globe, symbolizing the catholicity of the Christian Faith. *Roma Christiana* has conquered, crowned, and consummated *Roma Aeterna*. In these two modest works of minor art is shown in allegory the whole theme of the work now before us, "the revolution in thought and action which came about through the impact of Christianity upon the Graeco-Roman world" (p. v). The divorce of Graeco-Roman from Christian studies is one of the major defects of a Classical education as pursued in this country today. To all it is a commonplace that Christianity was, historically speaking, woven into the very texture of the ancient world. As Christians we know that it was no accident that Christ was born in the reign of Augustus Caesar. The life, thought and culture of the early Church are inevitably displayed to us against their Classical background. To take an illustration from the

field of art—for the first five centuries of our era there was no such thing as a specific and distinctive Christian art as far as style and *motifs* are concerned. The works of art produced by the earliest Christians, while Christian in subject-matter, are indistinguishable from their pagan contemporaries in form: the Christian monuments must be studied in the light of the pagan monuments, both as parts of a single whole. Conversely, no study of the literature of the Empire is complete which leaves out the New Testament, the writings of the early Greek and Latin Fathers and the beginnings of Christian verse. Yet the classical student often turns away from the Christian things as lying outside his province; while the ordinary student of Christianity (as distinct from the professional theologian) seldom appreciates the extent to which a sound and sympathetic study of pagan civilization can deepen his knowledge and understanding of the Faith. Dr. Cochrane's fine book, unfolding the "transition from the world of Augustus and Vergil to that of Theodosius and Augustine" (p.v.), should go far towards remedying this defect.

The book is planned as a drama in three acts—"Reconstruction", "Renovation" and "Regeneration". In Act I the setting of the whole piece is displayed to us, the story of the Roman imperial system from Augustan to Diocletianic times, already summarized in the Preface as a final and definitive expression of Classical order; as the final effort to reach the goal towards which the whole of ancient political action had been directed, the creation of a world made safe for civilization; as the last word in "creative politics" (p.v.). The story is told in a vigorous and arresting style, while revealing little that is actually new or original in knowledge or ideas. The first two chapters, "Pax Augusta" and "Romanitas", belong closely together. Here Dr. Cochrane seems to us to have accepted too easily the common view of the Augustan principate as something quite unique and specifically Roman in aim and method. That Augustus' problem was that of associating power with service, of reconciling the demands of empire with that of civic freedom (p. 3), is, of course, not to be denied. But it was not his own peculiar

problem. It had already been the problem of Alexander and of the Hellenistic kings; and its solution was still, at least in theory, the object of the later Emperors, however much the media of their operations had become "byzantinized". Augustus is cast for the well-known, but (to our thinking) misleading role of champion of all that is Latin and Italian as opposed to the "degenerate Hellenistic monarchies" of Julius Caesar and Marc Antony on the one hand and the equally "degenerate oriental despotism" of the third century A.D. on the other. Caesar, we are asked to believe, definitely renounced the Classical commonwealth, "plunging into the most degraded form of contemporary political obscuratism" (p. 9). His spirit is one of "sublime egoism", of *libido dominandi* unabashed (p. 10). "His final solution was to 'sell out' in favour of Hellenistic autocracy" (p. 11). This is to play into the hands of Caesar's political opponents, to see him through their eyes. Admittedly his ultimate aims are obscure, for he died with his work of reconstruction hardly begun. We can, however, at least deduce from his acts a vision of an imperial community controlled by a single man with powers as wide as those of a monarch. From one point of view this is Hellenistic kingship. But the title he chose for himself was *imperator*, not *rex*. *Rex* was part of the vocabulary foisted upon Caesar by his immediate and personal enemies. It is this propaganda together with the unfortunate connotation of the title *dictator* and the memories of the Ides of March, which accounts for the apparent hiatus between Caesar and Augustus, for the omission of any reference to Caesar's name in the *Odes* of Horace and for his non-appearance, save in one veiled allusion, in the whole of the *Aeneid*. Yet Augustus was proud to boast himself *Divi filius*; and antiquity, as Suetonius bears witness, saw in Caesar the founder of the Roman Empire. If the true issue in the last century of the Republic "was not as between 'liberty' and 'monarchy', but rather the form which monarchy should assume" (p. 13), if the Augustan principate emerged as a *de facto* sovereignty (p. 21), then Caesar and Augustus belong to the same "cadre", though the ingredients (the same in both cases) in their respective

systems may have been mixed in different proportions. And if the Classical idea of the commonwealth was the "common good" (p. 21), the "good life" for all, what evidence have we that Caesar sought to destroy this? Nor was this a specifically Latin idea. It is found in the philosophic justification of Hellenistic monarchy as *Philanthropia*, and of the monarch as one who recognizes the duty and responsibility of promoting the welfare of his subjects. With Alexander and his successors, no less than with the Roman Caesars (even in the third century A.D.), the watchwords were *Eirene* (*Pax*) and *Homonoia* (*Concordia*)\*. The actual terminology may be different, but the whole notion of Roman *ordo* guided by a *protector*, *rector*, *gubernator* or *moderator reipublicae*, the ideal of justice for all "alike against the powerful forces of monopoly and the excesses of mob-rule" (p. 24), the Classical ideals of stability, prosperity and leisure—all were implicit in the Ideal of the Hellenistic *basileus* as his people's *soter* and *euegetes*.

No less unreal, to our mind, is the opposition set up between the "Latin" Augustus and the "Hellenistic" Antony, and the idea of Actium as a "Roman Salamis", a victory for the Classical idea of the commonwealth over the subversive forces of Orientalism" (p. 15). Here we would steer a middle course between Dr. Cochrane's picture of Actium as the triumph of Italy and the Latin ideal over an orientalized Greece, on the one hand, and, on the other, Mr. R. Syme's ruthless exposition of the whole campaign against Antony and Cleopatra as a party "stunt", deliberately "written up" by Augustus with all the artifices of a pastmaster in propaganda and deceit.† That Augustus did make propaganda against Antony as his personal foe and rival in an indisputable fact.‡ But if we examine this propaganda we observe that it is directed against Antony, not *qua* Hellenistic monarch, but as the puppet-husband of an Egyptian queen ("Aegyptia coniunx"). In the famous Vergilian passage§ it is not Hellenized Egypt which is ranged against Rome,

\* See Tarn, *Alexander the Great and the Unity of Mankind*.

† See *The Roman Revolution*, especially Ch. XXI.

‡ See *Cambridge Ancient History*, Vol. X, p. 90 f.

§ *Aeneid*, VIII, 675 ff.



but (as Dr. Cochrane himself hints in a footnote on p. 67) Egypt in alliance with the forces of the true Orient :

hinc ope barbarica variisque Antonius armis,  
victor ab Aurorae populis et litore rubro,  
Aegyptum virisque Orientis et ultima secum  
Bactra vehit.

"Latrator Anubis", "Aegyptus", "Indi", "Arabs", "Sabaei", "Nilus" are the words which run like a thread through these well-known lines. Cleopatra herself appears as Isis :

regina in mediis patrio vocat agmina sistro.

All these are elements lying as yet outside the Graeco-Roman orbit proper, and as such they are feared. But the absorption of some of them, at any rate, was only a matter of time. Egypt and Arabia were to become Roman provinces; the Flavian Caesars officially established the cult of Isis as a *religio licita* in Rome; and Nilus has his place among Hadrian's Roman coin-types. From Velleius Paterculus and Plutarch we learn that one of Augustus' strongest cards against Antony was the latter's adoption of the role of Antonius-Dionysos at Alexandria. But here again the emphasis is all on the Egyptian cult of Dionysos-Osiris as practised by Cleopatra and her forebears. Eight years before, in 39 B.C., Antony had enacted the part of Neos-Dionysos in "Classical" Athens in the company of his Roman wife Octavia and had aroused no outcry thereby; he had even struck coins for himself and Octavia stamped with the Dionysiac *cista*\*. Augustus found it useful in 31 B.C. to stress the oriental aspects of the Dionysiac cults. But these were speedily reconciled with imperial culture. For the Asiatic Dionysos, returning in triumph from India, was a saviour-god and, as such, the counterpart of Alexander, founder of the first oecumenical empire, from whom Augustus was by no means anxious to dissociate himself†. And was not Augustus himself soon to be hailed by the

\* See *Journal of Roman Studies*, Vol. XXII, p. 149 f.

† Suetonius, *Aug.* 18; 50; 94 (5).



*koinon* of Asia as "the saviour who has made war to cease and ordered all things aright, the god whose birthday was the beginning of the good tidings (*euangelia*) which he has brought to the world"? Claudius patronized the Dionysiac artists; and the first emperor to assume the title of Neos-Dionysos was the warlike and practical Trajan\*. It is clear that the Hellenistic portions of the Empire could not feel that Augustus and his successors had committed themselves to working only "on fundamentally Roman lines" (p. 16). Up to a point we may say that Augustus exploited apropos of Actium the Roman fear of "subversive Orientalism" interpreted as oriental barbarism:

dum Capitolio  
regina dementis ruinas  
funus et imperio parabat

contaminato cum grege turpium  
morbo virorum. (Horace, *Odes*, I, 37.)

But his real and genuine quarrel with Cleopatra was not that she and Antony represented monarchy *versus* principate, but that she imperilled the unification of the Empire and the establishment of the Roman Peace. Whether she dreamt of some vast kingdom (Tarn) or merely of the extension and consolidation of her own domains (Syme), Cleopatra with Antony at her side stood for disruption, for the possibility of detaching the eastern provinces from their union with the West. With *Discordia* and *Bellona* in her train† she is a menace to *Concordia* and *Pax*; and if the *Itali* and the Roman gods—the *Penates*, the *magni di*, Neptune, Venus and Minerva—oppose Cleopatra on the Shield of Aeneas it is because Rome and Italy are the centre of that imperial unity on which everything depends. But the real hero of the day, the victor's heavenly patron, is no Romano-Italian deity but the Greek Apollo:

Actius haec cernens arcum intendebat Apollo.

\* Weber, *Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Kaisers Hadrianus*, p. 9 f.

† Vergil, *Aen.* VIII, 702-3.

—a Greek god, but not alien to Rome, representing no “sharp reversion from the Hellenic to the Italian point of view” (p. 61), but the perfect expression of the unity and harmony of the Graeco-Roman world. Actium is, in fact, a “Graeco-Roman Salamis”. So precious are unity and peace that they must be purchased at all costs, even if it involves the sacrifice of the noblest elements in barbarism, should these refuse to be absorbed and civilized. Such, as Dr. Cochrane so movingly shows (p. 68), was the lesson of the tragic deaths of Turnus and Camilla. It was surely just this universality of the imperial appeal which inspired Vergil’s vision of the *Pax Augusta* in its cosmic setting, his sense of the catholic mission of Eternal Rome. The preservation of local and racial differences within the framework of the world-community was one of the secrets of Rome’s permanence (p. 73). Everyone found a place there for himself and for his own tradition, whether he was Latin, Greek, African, Syrian, Spaniard or Gaul. And if this was realized under the aegis of Augustus-Aeneas, can Aristotle’s picture of the “best man” ruling really be said to endorse “doctrines which undermined the very being of the commonwealth” or common good (p. 31) ?

“He was called Augustus,” Dio Cassius tells us, “as being something more than a man.” How did this come about ? In his third chapter, entitled “Roma Aeterna”, Dr. Cochrane traces the story of the “superman” in Greece and Rome. Hellenism had always recognized a second type of excellence, co-existing with that of the citizen, the excellence of the “hero-founder” or of the “hero-intervener” at moments of crisis. With the disintegration of the *polis* after the Peloponnesian War the Greek mind turned with increased attention to the idea of the “saviour-hero”, an idea directly in line with the Classical notion of the pre-eminently excellent man ; and when Alexander emerged as the “saviour-hero” *par excellence*, as the first Greek universal emperor of the brotherhood of man, the king was raised, by an easy and natural process, into the sphere of “a kind of intermediate being discharging the functions of an earthly providence” (p. 89). This concept of kingship managed to survive

even the most dismal failures of the Diadochi to implement the Alexandrine ideal; and Alexander's mantle fell upon Augustus. In Livy's *History* the Greek notion of Luck (*Tyche*) combining with Excellence (*Arete*) to produce the pre-eminent man (p. 111) is applied to the problems of the first century B.C. Livy's object is to suggest that "a situation has arisen which calls for nothing less than the intervention of a second founder" equipped with these very qualities of *virtus* and *fortuna* (p. 108). Just as Romulus, Rome's first founder, had begun his work "with a ritual act of unmistakable significance when . . . he traced the limits of the *poemeri*um (p. 105), so Augustus, the second Romulus, refounds and saves Rome by a great creative act—an act symbolized most strikingly in the coin-types of some of his successors, on *sestertii* of Trajan, shown as ploughing with two oxen, an allusion to the extension of the *poemeri*um as a result of his Dacian conquests, and on coins and medallions of Commodus, the Roman Hercules, with the legend "Herculi Romano Conditori" accompanying a similar scene. But the ideal Emperor must not only found: he must also toil; for in Rome special emphasis was laid on the idea of divinity won through services rendered to man: "suscepit autem vita hominum consuetudoque communis, ut *beneficiis excellentes viros* in caelum fama ac voluntate tollerent. Hinc Hercules, hinc Castor et Pollux, hinc Aescupalius, hinc Liber etiam . . . hinc etiam Romulus . . . dii rite sunt habiti".\*

With Augustus we have "entered into the region of *supermen*" (p. 113). But has not Dr. Cochrane himself shown us that in the pre-imperial Hellenic and Roman worlds we have never really been outside it? The cult of the Emperors is not, he tells us, merely "a form of Orientalism transplanted into Italy from the Hellenistic world" (a view less commonly held nowadays than he seems to suppose). "It was rooted in theories of human nature more or less explicit in Classicism" (p. 110). And is it really true that in the Hellenistic and imperial phases of her history things were entirely lost which Greece had possessed before—"that substantial equality presupposed,

\* Cicero, *De Nat. Deor.*, II, 62.

in political life" and "the ideal of felicity to be realized by communal endeavour" (p. 113)? Had the denizens of the free *poleis* of Classical Greece ever lacked for long the "tutelage" of those pre-eminent (or "august") and "lucky" individuals who stepped so rapidly each into his predecessor's shoes? Does not Thucydides tell us that Athens "in theory a democracy was in fact governed by her leading citizen"? Is there not something to be said for the equality of imperial citizenship under the aegis of a more permanent and stable representative of "virtue" and "fortune"? Did the Empire with its manifold prospects of public and civic service in every walk and rank of life really offer no scope for communal endeavour in the pursuit of happiness? And if it is true that "the deification of imperial virtue involves, as an inevitable corollary, the deification of imperial fortune" (p. 113), then it must still be pointed out that the Emperor's fortune had no significance except as identified with the fortune or *felicitas* of the whole imperial community: it was not his personal preserve. Similarly, the imperial virtue was not confined to the imperial person but was shared by all those who showed outstanding distinction as his collaborators in the military or civil sphere. The difference between Classical Hellas and imperial Rome was, as far as the concept of man is concerned, a difference of degree, not of kind. The idea of pagan "sanctity" as attainable through intrinsic or inherent excellence runs through the whole story. It was not *Romanitas* only which denied Original Sin.

The last chapter of Part I, entitled "Regnum Caesaris Regnum Diaboli" raises the whole ethical problem of the imperial cult. How far was the Devil involved? What was the measure of Caesar's responsibility? To what extent was Caesar in accepting divine honours, and his subjects in foisting them upon him, really sinning against the light? Dr. Cochrane has already spoken, in the opening lines of his book, of the "nemesis" which overtook the Augustan system and of how, "in their apostacy from Augustan principles, men groped blindly for a new and commanding formula of life". And now again we are told that an ideology, erected upon the complimentary

concepts of virtue and fortune, having attained its apotheosis at Rome in the person of Augustus, imposed upon his successors "a nemesis from which there could be no escape" (p. 129). It is clear that Dr. Cochrane means by "nemesis" divine monarchy as the logical consequence of Classical naturalism, by "apostacy" the failure to arrest the inevitable development of *principatus* into *dominatus*. But we should like, if possible, to go deeper than this and at least inquire how far the Emperors and their world were really guilty of the *hybris* which produces the nemesis? What was, in their case, the deliberate rejection of apprehended truth which the term "apostacy" properly implies? That Augustus, Tiberius and Claudius did, on certain occasions and in certain circumstances, refuse, or deprecate, the attribution of divine honours to themselves is a well-known fact\*; and there is Vespasian's familiar deathbed jest—"vae puto deus fio". Yet no really serious measures were taken to check the development of Emperor-worship; and, setting aside the abnormalities—Caligula, Gaius, Nero, Domitian and Commodus, such sane, high-minded and enlightened rulers as Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius accepted unhesitatingly, so far as we can judge, the acclamation "Dominus et Deus", "my Lord and my God". In other words, it looks as if the Emperors both knew and did not know that divine honours are the perquisite, not of man, but of God. That God, the beginning and end of all things, can certainly be known from created things by the natural light of reason is taught by St. Paul and the Vatican Council. No man can bestow on man, no man can accept from man, a share in the divinity of the One, True God, our Creator and Lord, as thus understood. And may we not see in the ancient concept of *hybris* and nemesis itself, whether expressed in the Greek myth of Salomoneus or in the scruples of a Roman Caesar, some faint reflection from the unclouded light of human reason breaking through the mists of error in which the effects of Original Sin can envelop the human mind?

\* See M. P. Charlesworth, "The Refusal of Divine Honours", in *Papers of the British School at Rome*, Vol. XV, 1939.

On the other hand, if the outstanding effect of Original Sin on Classicism as a whole was to obscure the utter "otherness" of God, to engender the notion that man can have a natural and innate capacity, *qua* man, for godhead and hence to interpose a host of man-gods between Creator and creature, can we pass an unqualified condemnation on rulers and ruled as hypocrites and apostates? Can we expect any but a few to have comprehended Plato's and Plotinus' vision of God as ineffable and transcendent, dwelling apart in a realm of inaccessible majesty? Can we be surprised that the gods whose divine honours Tiberius shrank from sharing were none other than his own deified parents; or that Claudius' similar hesitation was motivated by nothing more exalted than the fear of appearing vulgar (*φωρτικός, insolentior*)? It may well be that Emperor-worship was to *some* extent a culpable rejection of the naturally known truths about God and man in favour of these perversions. Herein would lie its hybris and apostacy. At any rate, it was not actually an apostacy from Augustan principles, in which, by Dr. Cochrane's own confession, these very perversions were already endemic. Man was indeed caught in an ideological prison-house from which there was no escape until Christ came to set him free. But the cause of his captivity, of his nemesis, was something far more significant than the end of the "free" *respublica* or the passing of the "constitutional" principate; or even than his failure to establish any intelligible relationship between the twin concepts of character and circumstance (p. 157). And if we take Tacitus as a type of imperial times, "the fundamental ambiguity of his outlook" exhibits something more serious than "a shocking declension from the spirit of Augustan Rome" (p. 135): Tacitus' "lack of an adequate intellectual defence" against the Emperor's claim to godhead must be referred to his wholly inadequate notion of the nature of God. All the same, let us beware of judging the Roman Emperors and their devotees by the standards we may legitimately apply to rulers and ruled in modern times. To condemn Emperor-worship as we would condemn similar phenomena in the mentality of modern Europe



(p. 110) is to overlook the fact that Europe has now lived in the full light of the Christian Revelation for nearly two thousand years; and to compare the words used by imperial writers to explain and justify the imperial power with "phrases with which we are all too familiar today" (p. 131) is to forget that, whereas the peoples of modern Europe know, or should know, where to find their true "father and shepherd", the peoples of the early empire had no one to look to but the Emperor as their common saviour, benefactor, protector and providence. The Antonine slogans "parroted on coins and inscriptions long after they had ceased to have any meaning" (p. 140 f.) did still retain *some* meaning for these peoples as expressing the one hope of secular happiness to which they clung. If Trajan was regarded as vicar of Juppiter, Juppiter's vice-gerent on earth, ruling as his delegate by his grace,\* it was an easy step from this, given the nature of Juppiter, to Diocletianus Jovius, to the Emperor as the manifestation or emanation of the god. As expressing the logical conclusion of Emperor-Worship, Diocletian is indeed more accurately described as the last great exponent of the old order than as the founder of the new (p. 174).

We have lingered long over *Romanitas* as the final expression of Classical culture because we judge its true appraisal to be the essential basis of a right appreciation of the Christian challenge. After all, "the best approach to truth is through the study of error" (p. vii). It is, moreover, obvious that this is the main sphere in which the Classical specialist can venture to proffer criticism with confidence. But the Christian Classicist is fully conscious that the real importance of Dr. Cochrane's book begins at the very point where his own specialized Classical studies so often, and so unfortunately, tend to end. Henceforth his role must be less that of critic than of learner. In the space still at our disposal it is not possible to do more than indicate the contents of Parts II and III, "Renovation" and "Regeneration". They must be read with the greatest attention as an original and most illuminating study, first of the response

\* See Pliny's *Panegyricus* and the Beneventum arch.



and reaction of *Romanitas* to its spiritual conqueror, from Constantine to Theodosius, of the vain attempts to exploit Christianity, through a misunderstanding of its true character, as a "success-religion" for the realization of secular ideals (here we note with approval that Athanasius is rightly appreciated as the disinterested champion of orthodox Nicene Trinitarianism against imperial intervention in doctrinal affairs); and secondly of the most radical revolution that the world has ever seen, the emancipation of man, of the essentially individual, personal man, from servitude to the kingdom of himself that he might accept the free citizenship of the Kingdom of God. (As Dr. Cochrane aptly remarks (p. 386), the *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius are addressed to himself, but the *Confessions* of St. Augustine are addressed to God). The last three chapters on St. Augustine are the climax to the whole book, which might, indeed, be summarized as being, from start to finish, one magnificent vindication of the Christian doctrine of Original Sin. Man now learns to seek his true *pax, libertas* and *aeternitas*, not in his natural, but in his supernatural, life; the moribund values of Classical culture have been born again into a new order; and in the writings of Augustine the dead language of the political *Romanitas* of Caesar has become the living tongue of the spiritual *Romanitas* of Christ. Other revolutions and liberations come and go to make way for their successors. But Christians have no need to start a new revolution in order to deliver man from each novel form of bondage. For the Christian revolution, begun in the reign of Augustus Caesar, goes on all the time and the Christian is perforce a revolutionary. The Incarnation is the pivot of all history; and the student of Its temporal setting, the Roman Empire, may proudly, yet humbly, approach his subject as being one of unparalleled significance.

JOCelyn M. C. TOYNBEE.

## SOME RECENT BOOKS

*The Persecution of the Catholic Church in the Third Reich.* Anonymous. (Burns Oates, 5s.)

THE purpose of this very important book is "to provide a factual report of the National Socialist persecution of the Church in Germany". The purpose is faithfully and amply fulfilled. The historian of the Church Struggle in Germany is beset by three main difficulties, first, that ecclesiastical matters have, as a rule, been rigidly excluded from the German Press; second, that information known to the writer must often remain undisclosed lest, the source of his knowledge being guessed, a friend be brought into Concentration Camp; third, that the persecution has, for the most part, been piece-meal, by dioceses or districts, and rarely by State law affecting the whole country simultaneously. There are, therefore, very few even within Germany itself who have any exact and extensive knowledge of the story as a whole. Under these circumstances the range and precision of the record here set down is most remarkable. Inevitably the whole story has not been told. The author appears to confine himself to those facts and documents where he can personally vouch for authenticity. There are some important omissions, but their absence does not seriously affect the value of the narrative.

The book falls into three parts. First we are given evidence of the persecution from utterances of the Vatican and of the German hierarchy. This section, in its place at the beginning, is ineffective because the significance of the citations only becomes apparent in the light of the narrative which follows. The second and longest part describes under many heads and illustrates with a wealth of detail the cunning and relentless persecution of the Church. The third part, which for the general reader might more conveniently have been placed first, sets out to prove that "the German nation is being brought up entirely and systematically in an anti-Christian spirit". A special word of commendation is appropriate to the pictures which vivify the text, and we note, finally, that a book of 565 pages, which might well have been priced at twenty-five shillings, is offered to a grateful public for only five.

For its copiousness, its objectivity, its accurate precision this book deserves the warmest praise and gratitude. The German Propaganda Department still maintains that there is in Germany no persecution of religion, and that the Nazis have no enmity against Christianity. We are here given full proof to the contrary in overflowing measure.

On one page by a slip the author refers to his work as "this

history". Strictly it is not history but invaluable materials for history that he has given us. The evidence is set out under headings without particular regard for chronology and there is little sense of movement in the book. The gradual disillusionment of the friends of von Papen, for instance, finds no place in it. Even the most general chronological table would have been a help. Historical events of great importance, but obscure significance—such as the sudden fall of Wilhelm Hauer, the apparent *volte de face* of Cardinal Innitzer, the summoning to Rome of the German Bishops on the accession of the present Pope—find no mention or explanation. The "voluntary" liquidation of the men's Teachers' Union—so important for the sequel in the schools—is only mentioned in a casual reference out of place.

Again, we are given no clear account of the new constitution nor of the legislation under which the persecution has taken place. The author is incorrect in writing of "actual illegalities" in the treatment of the Church. All the actions of the Nazi Party are technically "legal", but Germany has ceased to be a *Rechtsstaat*, and law, as we understand the term in Western Christendom, exists no longer. The account of the Immorality Trials is restrained to the point of understatement, but the section on the Currency Trials is unsatisfactory. Closer acquaintance with the Currency Laws would have shewn the writer that the behaviour of the State to the Church was more shameless than he suggests.

The index is inadequate. For instance, I find in it no reference to the important legal decision (p. 132) that a mother may be deprived of the custody of her children "because she had enrolled them in a Catholic private school". The neo-pagan marriages described in the last section are not in the index under "marriage" or "neo-pagan"; and it is not till some 250 pages after the first references to a mysterious "Journeymen's Union" that, still without help from the index, this may safely be identified with the famous Kolping family.

That the Nazi Party as a whole is determined to eradicate Christianity is not in doubt; but the book gives no hint of the tension within the Party on this subject, nor does it indicate the position of such as Bishop Hudal; it has nothing to say of the abortive "Rome-free" movement, and does nothing to explain the attitude of many of the younger Catholics who as Germans are warmly attached to the person of the *Führer*, who try to distinguish between the politics and the philosophy of the Nazi Party, who wish that the older leaders did not take so wholly negative an attitude to the national movement, and who are sympathetic to such institutions as the Hitler Youth on the ground that it need not be morally corrupt and that it helps to break down barriers

caused by the over-organization of the Church in Germany. It is difficult to believe that if the Catholic population as a whole had cared as deeply about the schools as about the crucifixes, they could not have put up a more effective resistance than they did. In sum this book gives, as it promises, a picture of the persecution, fair, detailed, and entirely convincing. It neither gives nor claims to give a history or picture of the whole situation as between Church and State.

NATHANIEL MICKLEM.

*The Aftermath.* By Jules Romains. (Peter Davies, 10s. 6d.)

It has become a habit with the English critics to hail the publication of each new volume of M. Romains's great novel with a complaint. They may praise it as a single, self-contained work of fiction, may dwell upon its dexterity, its character-drawing, its assured handling of a crowded scene, but sooner or later they will be found bewailing the existence of an ultimate mystification. "Still," they say in effect, "after the completion of so many instalments we are no nearer than we were to being shown the author's general idea. The design of the whole has not yet emerged." This, to any persistent reader of intelligence, is nonsense. Dense the forest may be, but at its entrance was a clearly marked notice, and the main path has been blazed with precision. It needs no abnormally observant eye to see the wood for the trees. From the earliest chapters M. Romains's intention should have been obvious to all, for it was no less than to trace through twenty years or so of French social and political history the emergence of good sense in foreign policy and honesty at home, to show the stages by which, it was hoped, the doctrine, since damned with the title of "appeasement", might hope, in the long run, to triumph. That is the *motif* which continually recurs through the sonorous orchestration of the eighteen volumes; that is what M. Romains has dinned without ceasing into the ears of reluctant commentators ever since the now distant date when he struck up his overture in *The Sixth of October*.

It should never be forgotten that he is a publicist as well as a writer of fiction, drama and verse. During the whole period which lay between the wars he never ceased to preach a sweet reasonableness to Europe. He championed the organization of Franco-German friendship, nor should his refusal to countenance a policy of Franco-German "collaboration" in the abnormal conditions of the armistice be held to be at variance with his earlier ideal. He lectured in Berlin: he visited the capitals of the Teutonic lands. He was, strangely, one of the few Liberal men of letters approved by the Third Reich where his *Hommes de Bonne Volonté* circulated in translation at a time when other

foreign novels were suppressed. He dared publicly to give thanks for Munich, but, after Rethondes, he was no less courageous in his determination to leave France.

Into the growing complexity of his novel he has worked the thread of his leading idea. There has never been the slightest uncertainty about his intention. But to achieve it in the modality of fiction, to set it in just relation to the operations of history, he found it necessary first to create a world which should give the illusion of density even while it isolated the chain of cause and effect with which he was primarily concerned. Over-simplification would have resulted in falsity. Hence the army of his *dramatis personae*, the interweaving as well as the islanding of so many separate lives, the apparent chaos which the scheme of his final order made imperative. His book is a detailed history of French life from 1908 to 1933 (or such was its first intention ; to what date he will now work cannot yet be foretold). Self-seeking as well as integrity in public and private concerns, corruption and idealism, treachery and honour, all had to be shown larger than life if the problem was to be fairly stated, the hoped-for solution presented with all its barnacle covering of difficulty. The great gallery of portraits is no mere triumph of virtuosity. Each subsidiary "story" plays its part in building up a convincing whole, in which characters rise now to the surface, sink now out of sight, with the true movement of the human sea. Here are no character-studies in a vacuum. M. Romain is not content to "wash in" a vaguely indicated background. Everything in his pageant must be shown four-square, and he gives as much attention to the occasional actor strutting for a few moments before the footlights as to the recurring mouthpieces of his main design. We are never allowed to forget the reality of the parasites upon the body politic. With unerring skill, observation, and fairness we are presented with the moral underworld of the Third Republic, are shown with a poet's sureness, such men of industry and politics as Haverkamp and Zülpicher, Gurau and Sammécaud, Mionnet, the priest-diplomat, the soldiers and the courtesans. They have had as much pains lavished upon them as those men and women who seek by enlightened reason to come to grips with the dragon of destruction. As the narrative proceeds the mounting sound of "goodness" comes to our ears. At point after point of the stretching social panorama small nuclei of excellence become apparent, rallying-points of hope. In every class, in every section of society, are thrown up, now singly, now in groups, those Men of Good Will who might, thought M. Romain until June 1940, have saved his country and the world. They are of many kinds and professions—Jallez and Jerphanion, those typical products of the Ecole

Normale Supérieure which has fathered so many writers, teachers and diplomats of modern France; Sampeyre, the humanist historian and director of fervent youth; Clanricard, the schoolmaster, and his wife-to-be, Mathilde Cazalis; Abbé Jean, the priest; Laulerque, true mixture of fanatic and unbeliever who tries the short cut to Utopia offered by Masonry and the secret way; even Maykosen, mysterious friend of princes and millionaires, who, for all his haunting of the coulisses of politics, is moved, like Manifassier in the corridors of the Chamber and Courson at the Quai d'Orsay, by a sincere desire to save our Western civilization from collapse.

A lesser work, however true its inspiration, might well have been shattered by the stubborn facts of actuality. When unreason overpowers the crew of Europe and takes the helm, what hope can there be for a book designed to trace the sure evolution of international good sense? When it became known that M. Romain had escaped to the United States, most of the readers of his book must have thought regretfully that "*La Douceur de la Vie*" marked the unpremeditated, the uncompleted, end. The author's full intention would never now be achieved because the foundations upon which it had been reared had cracked and given. But then came word from New York that the work was to be continued, and at once it became apparent that the depressing conclusion had been too hastily drawn. So truly had M. Romain built his world that it would be found to stand up even before the fantastic transformations of history. No matter how unexpected the sequence of events, the fabric of his fiction would be found equal to any new demands made upon it. In setting his stage he had made use of a device now popular among advanced scenic designers, who, on a darkened scene, can light now one, now another corner of the "set", throwing into prominence what hitherto has been hidden in obscurity, deflecting attention from centres no longer needed, and concentrating full illumination on corners hitherto unsuspected. Individuals and groups emerge and recede throughout the many volumes with the very movement of life itself: tendencies grow strong or weak: developments take form or vanish. Already, in the latest instalment, published in English with the general title *Aftermath*, we see the first hint of doubt, the first warnings of collapse. Issued in Paris just before the débâcle, they are heavy with foreboding. Jerphanion prophesies the triumph of unreason, draws conclusions from his close view of an unregenerate Germany, queries the existence of any real will to revolution in the lands beyond the Rhine. At home, in the person of Claude Vorge, we are shown a reaction towards anti-intellectualism, which may well serve as basis for Hitler's "New Order", a refusal of the old Renaissance standards, a surrealist clamour for



"instinctive" thought which cannot, if carried to extremes, but call in question all the achievements of the men of '89, the whole background of liberal and middle-class democracy. Even Jallez the dreamer—*Homme, par excellence, de bonne volonté*—sees vitality ebbing from the champions of the West. Something, he feels with a weary sense of resignation, has happened to France, to Europe. By a supreme effort the barbarian has been thrown back into the Germanic forests, but the conqueror has been left exhausted by the strain of victory. The will to further exertion is absent, the reaction from four years of war and blood-letting has been too violent. All he can see, all he really hopes for, is a quietness in which to recapture the grace and charm of existence behind the bastions of a League which he endows in his imagination with almost magical qualities of defence. And so, even before events had made necessary a radical change in the direction of his work, M. Romain, observant, far-seeing, disenchanted, had prepared to set his book on a new course. He will, we may be sure, rise to the occasion with undiminished verve and brilliance. It is something for us to know that his book is to go on. How precisely it will meet the challenge must be a matter for fascinating speculation. Its potentialities are many. As a microcosm of the world of twentieth-century France *Les Hommes de Bonne Volonté* holds a position unchallenged in the world of contemporary literature. Its breakdown would have been deplorable; its continuance cannot but be an earnest of what the intellectual and artistic vitality of France may still have in store for all of us.

GERARD HOPKINS.

*The Architecture of the Intelligible Universe in the Philosophy of Plotinus. An Analytical and Historical Study.* By A. H. Armstrong. Pp. xii + 126. (Cambridge University Press, 1940. 7s. 6d.)

AFTER the work of Dr. Inge, Professor Dodds and others, the thought of Plotinus can no longer be dismissed by the historian of philosophy as a dreamland of oriental mysticism, bizarre and arbitrary, unworthy of intellectual consideration. Plotinian Neoplatonism stands at the close of Hellenic philosophy, uniting in itself elements from preceding systems, and forming a link with Early Christian philosophic thought: it is a synthesis of the past—even if incomplete and containing in itself unreconciled tensions—and an inspiration and stimulus to the future. On the one hand, therefore, it cannot be disregarded by the historian of Greek philosophy, while on the other hand the historian of mediaeval philosophy cannot afford to neglect the thinker, in

whom St. Augustine found Plato born again, and whose thought exercised such a profound influence, even if indirect, on Christian speculation. But over and above his position in the line of philosophical development Plotinus is not unworthy of study for his own sake: indeed Mr. Armstrong says of him, that "He is also one of the few ancient philosophers whom we can still honour, though not uncritically, as a master, and not simply study as a historical curiosity" (p. 120).

Mr. Armstrong's work is a scholarly and carefully-thought-out contribution to the "Cambridge Classical Studies". It is not a long book, but it is closely reasoned and free from unnecessary verbiage. The author believes "in the great and permanent value of the philosophy of Plotinus" (p. 120), and his treatment is sympathetic; but one aim of his book is to bring out the fact that Plotinus' philosophy is not a fully consistent philosophy. Mr. Armstrong cautions us against making "the mistake of trying to explain Plotinus's system entirely from its historical antecedents" (p. 26); but he argues—and rightly, in our opinion—that it is largely these historical antecedents which are responsible for the inconsistencies.

For example, we find side by side in the *Enneads* the positive and negative conceptions of the One. In the first the One is conceived as the supreme and transcendent source of being (the primal source of "emanation"). This is the Aristotelian God identified with the Platonic *αὐτὸ τὸ ἀγαθόν* (emanation as "radiation" being perhaps an attempt to reconcile late Stoic thought with the Platonic conception of a hierarchy of being), a synthesis, which had already appeared in Numenius and Albinus. Plato speaks of the Good as *ἐπέκεινα τῆς οὐσίας*, but inasmuch as Plotinus calls the One *ἐνέργεια*, Mr. Armstrong justly remarks that "this makes it" (i.e. the One) "inevitably an *οὐσία*, however much it may transcend the beings which we know" (p. 3. But the author is surely wrong in adding: "if an *οὐσία*, then a one-in-many", at least if the One in itself is referred to, and not merely our mode of predication). In the negative conception, however, the One is conceived as not-Being, as *οὐδέν*, "not in the sense that it transcends all beings knowable to us, but because being simply cannot be predicated of it because it refuses all predication" (p. 14). This negative conception the author traces back, not merely to Plotinus' desire to stress the transcendence of the One but also to the Neo-Pythagorean exegesis of the Parmenides, and ultimately to Speusippus. If this is so, then Mr. Armstrong is right in finding an inconsistency between Plotinus' positive and negative conceptions (there *need* of course be no contradiction between the positive or analogical way and the negative way),

since the One of Speusippus was "potential", was "less than the Good" (p. 22).

Apart from historical factors leading to inconsistencies in Plotinus' thought, Mr. Armstrong refers to the mystical experience of Plotinus as a source of conflicting ideas, i.e. not the experience itself but the experience as rationalized. In the experience the Object is apprehended as transcending all other objects, while at the same time the "simplicity" of the experience might easily lead to the assertion of the Infinite or Absolute Self. The point made by the author, that an experience may be valid while the rationalization is imperfect or erroneous, is of course quite true. St. Ignatius of Loyola, for instance, draws attention to this fact in his Rules for the Discernment of Spirits.

But the reviewer does not feel altogether happy about the author's characterization of Plotinus' "passionate devotion towards the Supreme" as "un-Hellenic" (p. 32). Without wishing to deny the influence "of that stream of intense religious feeling from the East which makes its first entry into the Graeco-Roman world with Stoicism" (p. 33) we cannot agree, that it is absent from Plato, that the ascent in the Symposium under the impulse of Eros is simply "to the purely intellectual contemplation of the Idea". Moreover, the author admits of Plotinus and Philo, that "both are developing the teaching of the 'Phaedrus' and the 'Symposium'" (p. 73).

Nobody today would attempt to derive the Plotinian system from Gnosticism, and Mr. Armstrong does well to reaffirm Plotinus' hostility to the Gnostics, not only because of their arbitrary and unnecessary multiplication of intermediaries (no doubt largely syncretistic in motive), but also because of their condemnation of the visible world. Although not altogether consistently perhaps with the terms in which he characterizes matter, Plotinus derives from the Platonic "Timaeus" the view of the visible world as good, even if a less good. Moreover, even in the body the soul may achieve ecstatic union with the One.

The system of Plotinus takes little account of Time. "No historical event," says Mr. Armstrong, "could ever be for him of vital and decisive importance. This is one of the essential points of difference which separate him, and with him the whole Hellenic philosophical tradition, from Christian thought" (p. 112). The author would agree, then, with Dr. Inge, when the latter says: "As for history, I fear the consistent Neo-platonist must agree with Bosanquet that it does not matter very much" (*Philosophy*. April, 1935, p. 152). It is one of the glories of St. Augustine and succeeding Christian thinkers that they tried to incorporate what was of permanent value in the Neo-platonic tradition in a

"Weltanschauung", which centred round an historical event, the Incarnation of the Word of God. F. C. COPLESTON, S.J.

*The Uniqueness of Man.* By Julian Huxley, M.A., D.Sc., F.R.S. (Chatto and Windus, 1941. 10s. 6d. net.)

THE Secretary to the Zoological Gardens is singularly fortunate in being not only prominent in a branch of natural science but in possessing the rare gift of attractive popular exposition. Just how important that gift is to the community will be better appreciated after reading some of the purely biological essays in this volume. It would, for example, be well if every citizen were aware (as he certainly is not) how near we are to the extermination of all wild life on the planet. Man has become so exacting in his demand for *lebensraum* that the humbler members of creation are tending to follow the dodo into oblivion at an alarming rate.

If the striking and irrefutable facts set forth in the paper on Climate and Human History had been widely known, America and Australia would not be lamenting their great "Dust-bowls", and Great Britain would be further on the way to make her soil support her population. "Nature cannot be improved upon without the amassing of a deal of knowledge and the expenditure of a deal of pains," Professor Huxley warns us; and the pains will never be expended, or will be expended to no purpose, if the knowledge remains confined to a few specialists.

Several of the most interesting essays deal with genetics, as applied to the origins of species, to the concept of race and to human society. This last paper is in some respects the weakest in the volume, and contains some crude suggestions on the control of population by sterilization and birth control which are already obsolescent. His view-point has, however, moved far beyond the concept of "heredity" as a clear-cut factor opposed to "environment", although this impossible antithesis is still upheld by a number of his fellow eugenists and is responsible for many ill-conceived opinions on social reforms. With the Nazi theory of race modern genetics works sad havoc. "Man is unique in the extent to which the expression of characteristics most important to him as a species—intelligence, mentality and temperament—can be influenced by the character of his environment." Changes in so-called "national characters", the author points out, take place much too rapidly and frequently to be due to a true genetic change and are much more probably due to a summation of environmental causes. It is also a biological fact that the "crossing of types with the production of much variation is incomparably more frequent in man than in any other species. Man is also to a greater degree given to migration. Hence it follows that prac-

tically all human groups are of decidedly mixed origin", and the Germans are no exception. They are not even predominantly Nordic in racial type, and if they were it would be no particular cause for pride. As Professor Huxley rather unkindly reminds us, "Aristotle (Politics VII) gave what appeared even to that great thinker cogent reasons for believing the Nordic barbarians inherently incapable of rising to the level of Greek achievement".

This book is, however, something more than an attractive compilation of essays on popular science, for it contains a confession of faith very characteristic of the finer type of non-Christian thought of today. Far less dogmatic than the Darwinian biologist about this world, he is more dogmatic about the next, and is definitely atheist, whereas his grandfather's generation was content to be agnostic. His values for mankind are clearly in the main Christian values, but he conceives that man has evolved these concepts out of his own brain in the course of the complicated evolutionary ascent which he depicts so brilliantly in his opening essay. Religion he regards simply as growing from "man's ignorance and helplessness in the face of external nature—an attempt to find some framework of authority outside the individual and if possible outside the species". ". . . The concept of God has now reached the limits of its usefulness: it cannot evolve further" (p. 285). What is the Good Biologist's alternative? His answer is a "scientific humanism" which is to have all the advantages of a supernatural religion including the ideal of self-sacrifice, and the support which weak human nature demands, but without the "psychological trickery" which produced the belief in God. Man is to believe superbly in himself—and that will be more than enough. Professor Huxley evidently concludes that man, having travelled so far under his own steam, so to speak, will certainly go much further on the road to human betterment. We do not accept the premise, and the Professor himself (and the many thousands of intellectuals who hold the same creed) is apparently beginning to have some doubts about the deduction. In a preface written in October 1940 he admits frankly that the further progress of man is not necessarily upward. "The mechanistic ideals of the era of *laissez-faire* have proved an illusion. The promise of prosperity has been replaced by mass insecurity and frustration." He is convinced that "the Nazi system is a negation of any civilized order . . . but if we win, civilization is not necessarily safe. It can only be saved if it can transform itself so as to overcome insecurity, frustration and despair." The problem might well baffle even the most unique of animals. Perhaps by the time Professor Huxley writes his next preface he will have caught a glimpse of a more hopeful solution.

L. FAIRFIELD.

*The Papacy and the Modern State.* An Essay on the Political History of the Catholic Church. By F. R. Hoare. (Burns Oates & Washbourne. 15s.)

THE sub-title expresses more precisely the contents of this eminently purposeful book. At the outset the author insists that it is an "historical essay", to be "distinguished from a history by being primarily not a narrative of events but an exposition of a leading idea or principle of historical interpretation". Hence more than a third is given up to ancient times—the Coming of the Church and mediaeval Christendom. All very good reading throughout, in spite of the frequent intrusion of such disagreeable words as *atomization*, *supernaturalization*, *proletarianization*.

Liberalism is, according to Mr. Hoare, the enemy. By the time we reach the eighteenth century "the propagandists of the new creed of Liberalism were bent on dissolving the old structure as a preliminary to reconstruction". (Yet many have called the humanists of earlier centuries "liberal"; and perhaps not unjustly.) The toleration in England of forms of religion other than established Anglicanism must surely be set down rather to the large variety of these forms and the sheer impossibility of enforcing conformity than to an aggressive doctrinaire liberalism? Words of Newman written in 1853 may be recalled: "Political questions are mainly decided by political expediency and only indirectly and under circumstances fall into the province of theology".

As to the modern state, "corporatism", if we understand the author's argument aright, is the one true and distinctly Catholic order of society; desired by the papacy; to be enjoyed, it would seem, under strong authoritarian government. Popular government, with its various democratic liberties, is all wrong. Mr. Hoare is at no pains to conceal his opinions concerning those who do not share these convictions. Mazaryk and the liberators of Bohemia are "the Masonic government of the Versailles State of Czechoslovakia". The *Partito Popolare*, formed by Don Luigi Sturzo, though it won more than a hundred seats in the Italian legislature in 1919, was "hopelessly handicapped by its identification with the parliamentary and party system, in whose tactics Don Sturzo proved himself an adept". Because M. Maritain, with other French Catholics, could not admit that in the Spanish civil war General Franco was the leader of a crusade, we are told that "the most prominent group of Catholic intellectuals in France subordinated their religion to their political preferences so far as to give their support to the anti-Catholic side". Jews and Freemasons are, of course, at the bottom of all social and political wrongdoing.

Mr. Hoare looks back to the Middle Ages "when practically the



whole membership of the visible Church was comprised within a single political society, the Holy Roman Empire, and that society was co-extensive with the visible Church". But *practically* neither Frankish kings nor dukes of Normandy, neither kings of England or Scotland nor rulers of Ireland, were comprised within the Empire; while the Scandinavian kingdoms were even more remote. Surveying the present scene—and the essay includes many surveys of Catholic life and action past and present—Mr. Hoare decides that "the British political system may be called a parliamentary absolutism".

JOSEPH CLAYTON.

*Black Record. Germans Past and Present.* By Sir Robert Vansittart. (Hamish Hamilton. 6d.).

If the Chief Diplomatic Adviser to His Majesty's Government "takes his coat off" and publishes his much discussed broadcasts on the German people in book-form, he must expect to be criticized like any other writer. This is what we propose to do in this review: to examine Sir Robert's analysis of the permanent features of the German people without any regard to the high office the author holds.

The Germans are, according to Sir Robert, responsible for five aggressive wars within eighty years. He does not mention that the nineteenth century saw also French wars, British and Italian ones. He fully accepts Tacitus' description that the Germans "hate peace" and that they "think it weak to win with sweat what can be won by blood". How is it possible, Sir Robert asks, that modern Germany "has surrendered itself to one who wanted war . . . ? The answer is that the remnants of German conscience are easily satisfied by the drug of mechanical obedience to any order, however cruel. Prussianism, militarism, lust of world-conquest, Nazism—that sequence has made Germans the exponents of every imaginable variety of dirty fighting and foul play". Envy, Self-Pity, Cruelty are the main principles of German psychology.

Yet in spite of this "black record" demonstrated throughout 2000 years of German history, Sir Robert suggests that "the soul of a people *can* be changed. Other peoples have performed the feat. Why not Germany? Because she has not yet really tried. The effort can be made, but it will have to be a very big effort. . . . Without a fundamental change of soul, no other cure, no mere administrative or technical tinkering can be permanent. . . . It will take *at least* a generation."

Thus, on the one side, Sir Robert reduces the whole of the German history to the common denominator of its early tribal stage, on the other side he clearly admits the possibility of a change of soul. This change of soul may indeed be possible, but only and

when one also admits that German history shows repeatedly the unmistakable tendency to accept European standards and Western institutions. Freiherr vom Stein, Wilhelm von Humboldt, Droysen, Dahlmann, Welcker, Rotteck, Max Weber, Prince Max von Baden, Ebert, Hermann Müller, Otto Braun, Bruening are not individuals, they stand for a tradition which has always fought against the barbarian substance which is also to be found in the German people: "*Zwei Seelen fühle ich, ach, in meiner Brust.*"

This *Doppel-Wesen* of the German character makes any understanding co-operation with the Germans so difficult, but it is certainly a too sweeping generalization to assume the Germans in plural are *always* barbarians.

The German nation achieved her national structure when nationalism was already an anachronism. Bismarck's *Reich*—I disagree with Sir Robert who sees in him a predecessor of Hitler—only brought about a superficial unity which hardly covered Prussianism. Was it not Bismarck who declared in 1888: "Each great power which attempts outside of her sphere of interest to press or to influence the policy of other countries experiments outside the territory which God has given to her, she pursues a policy of power and not a policy of interest, she pursues a policy of prestige." This was the guiding principle of Bismarck's European policy after 1871 revealing quite a different spirit from that of Hitler's "New Order". And the Nazis' Third *Reich* used national slogans when the time of some kind of European institutionalism was already ripe. Only a European solution can today offer the Germans what they failed to achieve in their history: a social and economic security based on a sound state-structure which acknowledges European obligations.

It is true that Germans in the plural are inclined to sadism and cruelty. They never enjoyed a political education which harmonized and disciplined individual vices with the duties of the community. When Luther freed the individual Christian conscience four hundred years ago, he delivered it at the same time to the secular princes. Here perhaps is to be found the root of German obedience and mass-sadism. But one must also see that millions of Germans, particularly the working-classes, never showed any sign of aggressiveness.

The sociological characteristics of a people can only be formulated if one takes the various class-structures into account. The workers, but other social groups, too, feel today as Haffner's book *Germany: Jekyll and Hyde* has brilliantly shown as much overpowered by the Nazis as the French or the other nations which the Nazi war-machine have beaten into submission.

Finally I would like to say that those passages of Sir Robert's

book where he stresses the serious possibility of a future political re-education—a change of soul—of the German people are the sole comforting parts of his broadcasts. I wished he would follow up this line and give the Germans a message which might give them a hope and a future.

J. P. MAYER.

*Memoirs of Madame Pilsudski.* Illustrated. (Hurst and Blackett.)

THE widow of Marshal Pilsudski, who found a hospitable refuge in England when Poland was invaded on one side by the Germans and on the other by the Red Russians, has just published her memoirs in English. Their nature, and her intention in writing them, is best described in the words with which she begins her Preface.

"I have written this book not for the Poles, who know the history of their country, but especially for foreigners, giving them the *fragments* of my personal recollections against a historical background. . . ."

Thus she intersperses the remembered incidents of her life and descriptions of the events which she has witnessed with a great deal of information about the history of Poland and of Lithuania, as well as with a sketch of how the Polish nation felt and reacted to the yoke laid upon it by its three oppressors in the course of the nineteenth century, laying special emphasis on her account of conditions in the provinces annexed by Russia.

This historical aspect of her book is genuinely valuable, and will, in particular, appeal to most of her foreign readers, who, for the most part, have but little information on the subject.

The first part of the narrative is concerned with the journey which she made at the outbreak of the present war, in constant danger from German bombs, from Cracow to Warsaw, then on to Vilno, and, when the Soviet troops entered that city, by Kovno, Riga and Stockholm, to England. In the second part she reverts to memories of her childhood and youth when she was living with her grandmother at Sauvalko, a provincial town of Northern Poland. These recollections, which are marked by a touching simplicity, are eloquent of the patriotic feelings which animated Poles of every class of society. It evokes for the reader a picture of a national loyalty so strong, so firmly fixed, so confident in the future, that not even a century of terrible repression and the ban laid on the use of the Polish language in schools, government offices, local administration, public life in general, and even in the services of the Church, could shake it. It grew in strength from generation to generation and in spite of every new attempt to kill and uproot it.

When she first went to Warsaw to complete her studies at the

Commercial College, which was, at that time, under the directorship of her future husband Joseph Pilsudski, Mlle Szczerbinska (for that was her maiden name) joined the Right Wing of the Polish Socialist Party, of which, from 1909 to 1919, she was one of the most active members. Many times she risked not only her liberty, but her life. The pages in which she describes her political adventures form the most interesting part of her book, relating, as they do, in detail the many exploits in which she took a personal part, *quorum magna pars fuit*.

The first armed demonstration of the Party in Warsaw during the autumn of 1905, the attack on a mail train at Bezdarcyx, near Vilno (1908), organized and led by Pilsudski, the movement of arms and often of explosives for his secret military organization, the publication and distribution throughout the country of propagandist news-sheets and pamphlets, as well as the meetings of the Party—all these conspiratorial activities are described in a vivid and exciting manner. At this time she was arrested by the Russian police and spent many weeks in a Warsaw gaol. Later, during the German occupation, she was confined for nearly two years in the concentration camps of Szary Pory, in Posen, and Loban, in Silesia. Few things in the whole book are more interesting than her account of how political prisoners fared under the two governments.

The final section of the volume, which covers the period that followed the restoration of Polish independence, is almost completely devoted to the eminent man whose wife she became. She prints a number of his letters, written during the Russian campaign which culminated in the victory of Warsaw (1920), gives a number of details about the family life at Soulejewek, near Warsaw, where the Pilsudskis lived before the Marshal was in power, and quotes many of the opinions which he expressed in her hearing. Otherwise she merely repeats a great deal of what is already well known about her husband's later years. The reader closes the book with a feeling that Madame Pilsudski was a great Polish patriot, a woman full of energy and enthusiasm, who shrank from no sacrifice for the feelings and ideas which she had made her own.

It may be well to point out, however, that, belonging as she did to the Polish Socialist Party, she is rather too much inclined to think that it was the sole political organization which, during the last half century, took as its goal the restoration of the national independence within the country's historical frontiers. In fact, all the national parties, whether Democratic, Conservative, Liberal, or Popular, regarded this independence as their main end and object. They differed only in their views about the best tactics to adopt for the realization of their dream, and in their estimate of the relative weakness or strength of their various

oppressors, more particularly of Prussia and Russia. These were pressing problems long before the war of 1914-1918, and during its progress. They remained so after its conclusion and were never easy to solve.

IGNAZ BALINSKI.

*Come Back to Erin.* By Sean O'Faolain. (Cape. 8s. 6d.)

THE opening of Mr. O'Faolain's new novel is superb: I use the adjective carefully, because it does express the *panache*, the enormous gusto of invention, that Mr. O'Faolain seems at times to experience. The drab man in a macintosh dogged by a detective down the Dublin street: the big dark neo-Gothic church into which he turns: the detective kneeling in pretence of prayer: the beggar with the red beard and nothing on under his coat who importunes the watched man with the unexpected opening—"Would you by any chance be interested in Chinese Missions?": the grotesque climax as the detective begins to do the Stations of the Cross, so that he may see unobtrusively all round the church—macabre invention is piled on invention, the screw is turned again and again, the characters live with the enormous physical and mental vitality which Joyce taught the Irish novelist—the absurdity and the elevation of the human spirit caught simultaneously. Alas, after that opening the novel falls to pieces. I have a great admiration for Mr. O'Faolain's previous novels—*A Nest of Simple People* and *Bird Alone*, and I for one would much rather ignore what I feel is perhaps the mistake of a temporarily tired man. The literary gunman who escapes to New York and falls in love with his half-brother's wife is a sad comedown: Mr. O'Faolain has dropped into all the tricks of the female novelist—the tedious discussion of books and poems that you feel the author likes, rather than the characters; the tossing about from one mind to another (how wise James was with his dogma of "the point of view"); the admiring sentimental descriptions of his hero's masculine appearance—"his wiry, fair hair was down on his forehead like a horse's, or a bull's curls"; the dreadful scraps of whimsical verse in the woman's letters; the accounts of clothes; the bad forcefulness of phrases like "he savaged" which shows an inability to put the tone of the voice into the dialogue itself. Whether the story has a climax was lost on me, bemused and astonished by Frankie's "rough animal magnetism", his "taurine voice", and his excitement over the manuscript of Joyce's *Exiles* which the heroine must have purchased from Mr. Quinn. There is a lot of talk about spiritual exile, but admirers of Mr. O'Faolain's enormous talents will be more concerned with the author's own temporary exile from the scene and characters which obviously call forth his real powers.

GRAHAM GREENE.

